# WORKING TOWARDS A COLLABORATIVE ADVANTAGE: ORGANISATIONAL LEARNING THROUGH PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT AND MANAGEMENT AS ORGANISATIONAL CONTROL.

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## *Abstract*

Inter-organisational collaborations are resource intensive and fraught with complexities which combine to make management challenging. Studies of collaborations try to discover what makes for a successful collaborative relationship and thereby achieving a 'collaborative advantage.' The theory of collaborative advantage focuses on the complex micro-processes of participation in collaborative initiatives, demonstrating the multiple theoretical themes that exist in the lifespan of a collaboration. The theorisation of themes within collaborations show that they have an overlapping effect on one another and are therefore complex. Creating a theoretical perspective of each theme provides conceptual handles as a basis for action to be used in isolation. By combining organisational control theory and organisational learning theory in order to expand the theoretical perspective of organisational learning as a conceptual handle, this thesis develops the theory of collaborative advantage. The combination of theories enables the development of a model for the management of organisational learning through organisational controls in inter-organisational collaborations. It thus answers the research question: "In collaborative organisations, how does performance measurement and management impact organisational learning in the development of collaborative advantage?"

To underpin the study, the literature review examines theories of collaborative advantage, organisational learning and performance measurement and management (PMM) as organisational control in an inter-organisational context. These findings highlight a gap in collaboration theory which is not addressed by either theories of organisational learning or PMM. The knowledge that exists is not yet supported by empirical evidence but allows for the creation of a conceptual framework and literature-based research propositions that shape this study.

This informs a multi-case study protocol focusing on five UK based not-for-profit collaborations, taking a critical realist approach to research the causality of performance measurement and management on organisational learning. Data collection techniques include semi-structured interviews, documentary analysis, and observations. Through a template analysis, within case data findings are drawn which are subsequently put through a cross-case data analysis.

The study shows the relationship both learning and social organisational controls have with goal and success specificity and nurturing this triangular relationship is key in the pursuit of collaborative advantage.

An additional theoretical contribution of this thesis is the extension of organisational control theory. By exploring the effects of different types of control it is highlighted that social organisational controls play a more prominent role than technical organisational controls in the facilitation of organisational learning in collaborations.

Underlining the theoretical and contextual contribution, the study presents a theoretical model which is offered as a management tool. This can be used to develop conditions which assist the nurturing of multi-level goal engagement and organisational learning through the management of social organisational controls. The thesis concludes by discussing the research limitations and opportunities for future research.

## *Dedication*

*The thesis is dedicated to my wife, Michelle, and our most precious daughter, Orla Jane:*

*I'll be forever grateful for your love and support.*

## *Acknowledgements*

By its very nature, the PhD thesis is an individual and at times quite isolating research project. While of course the work is all mine it would simply not have been possible without the help and support of others, to whom I would like to offer my thanks and appreciation.

Firstly, to Heriot Watt University for giving me the opportunity to pursue a long-held ambition to return to study. There are too many individuals to mention explicitly, but many at the university have shown great belief in me and offered great encouragement and advice in my development as a researcher and teacher during my time. Many of the staff, both academic and non-academic have made being part of the university a most enjoyable and worthwhile experience.

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I must also convey thanks to the many organisations and individuals across the collaborations used in this study. Without their kind assistance and selfless giving of their time I would have not been able to undertake this project.

Lastly, my most profound thanks go to my wife and daughter: for the sacrifices they have had to make and the years of support and belief in me.

## *Research Thesis Submission*

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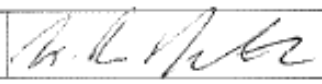
| Signature of Candidate: |  | Date: | 28/08/2019 |

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# Table of Content

## *Index of Tables*



## *Index of Figures*

# 1 Introduction

## *1.1 Pre-Research Overview*

### 1.1.1 Researcher Background and Interest.

The researcher has come from the Scottish tourism industry which is a growth sector that contributes £6 billion, 5%, of the national GDP (Tourism Leadership Group, 2018). It plays a key role in employment growth and supports economic activity in both rural regions and urban cities. Tourism in Scotland also supports other Scottish sectors and industries, through the supply chain and additional visitor spend, in areas such as food and drink, and transport, while providing an increasing international profile. Collaboration and partnerships have thus played and continue to provide an essential role in enabling Scotland as a world-class tourism nation (Tourism Leadership Group, 2018). The Scottish Government provide funding and support to a number of non-governmental-organisations [NGOs] to support the tourism industry, both its businesses and people within, to promote growth and innovation.

It is from one such NGO that the researcher worked with individual businesses, public agencies, local authorities and other tourism stakeholders in a variety of regions to promote the economic opportunities available through tourism initiatives. These ranged from major global events such as the Ryder Cup and Commonwealth Games through to themed regionalised initiatives that would attract a more local audience.

While the researcher was involved in highly successful collaborative initiatives such as the aforementioned major events, the experience of collaboration in the industry was not always as positive, often met with frustration and scepticism, above all from micro and small enterprises, which represent 96% of business type and 56% of employees in the sector in Scotland (Tourism Leadership Group, 2018). In contrary to this negative perception business people might have of collaborating in Scottish tourism, the researcher was previously engaged with a collaborative project which added £83 million annual visitor spend with a £463 million annual economic impact in one geographical region alone. In contrast however, the researcher has experienced collaborative projects, which despite investment of human and financial resource, have failed to achieve the desired outcomes.

The researcher through multiple collaborative projects, observed a disconnection between his own learning of how to collaborate well and how best practice was shared. Although the employer, a NGO, was a champion of the benefits and arguable necessity of inter-

organisational collaboration, there was an absence of sharing experiences both regionally and nationally. There was no set blue print of collaborating, but given the unique make-up of each collaborative project, internal or external differences, this perhaps was either not possible or desirable. Once an idea for a collaboration had got off the ground, much of the challenges experienced by the researcher surrounded encouraging and convincing others to commit resource. While there were examples of successful projects to use as evidence to win over commitment, the measurement of impact might have been for value gain for a wide range of stakeholders, therefore the return of investment of each participating organisation would have been more difficult to evidence and monitor. Evaluations and performance measurements were often post-event, generic and, or, done purely from the perspective of the singular organisation, leaving little opportunity to make improvements to functionality or processes during the lifespan. This type of perceived inequity would quite often be raised, more often by small and micro enterprises with less resource and would create issues of trust and power balance within a group. Other experience though has also shown that in instances where smaller scale organisations are willing to commit what resource they can, they often do not have the human resource to offer which inevitably leads to issues of deadlines and completing action.

Such experiences in the tourism industry led the researcher to question if and how organisations could learn to make inter-organisational collaborative projects more successful as they develop and how they could learn to do them more effectively and efficiently in the future.

### 1.1.2 Industry Context

Before identifying a research question, or aims and objectives, the researcher wished to identify if the personal positive and negative experiences of inter-organisational collaborations was unique to the industry context or if these traits existed in other contexts. Through a general search of secondary resources, it became clear quite quickly that collaboration occurs across all sectors of business, leading to leadership and organisational success and significantly increasing the possibility of achieving desired goals (Biro, 2013). Collaborative approaches have been shown to deliver a wide range of benefits, which enhance competitiveness and performance (BSI, 2010).

Within the public and voluntary sector, having a collaborative approach is seen to be one of the crucial elements of organisational development and ‘over the last 20 years, the UK voluntary and community sector has assumed a growing service delivery role in a number of sectors and this has raised issues around intensifying demands on the sector and the need to build collaborative alliances’ (NICVA, 2012, p. 4). Collaborative working was a key policy

under the UK government in the early part of this century (Myers and Sacks, 2001). Both inter and intra organisational collaboration across networks are in the strategy of major public bodies such as NHS England (NHS England, 2016) while the Scottish Government, encouraged by findings from a report into the food and drink sector, is promoting the value of collaboration and the study of best practice for the industry (Scottish Government, 2015). This is reflected across the Scottish Government service delivery strategy as it strives to improve partnership working across sectors, for example, in health and education (Scottish Government, 2010). The focus in public service is on collaborating better to ensure improved outcomes for the service user.

Collaborating across organisations, creates a complexity that inevitably leads to the possibility of some form of collaborative failure. Achieving goals of a collaborative project is not a straightforward venture and the efforts required to make it a success is a test of an organisation's leadership and workplace culture (Biro, 2013). Statistics on failure vary depending on the cited source but it ranges from 50% to 80% (van der Kamp, 2011; Gartner, 2015). While any such estimate of collaboration failure rate should be accepted with a great deal of caution, current research into collaborations reveal a complexity of intertwined challenges. Unless properly managed by the practitioner, these will lead to a greater chance of not achieving the intended outputs and outcomes of the project:

> …collaborations can be tricky to navigate; failure can lead to poor quality work, damage to reputation, high financial costs and loss of intellectual property or relationships. Given these risks, it is important that [organisations] consider collaboration with care – not doing it just to please [authority], but because there is a strong case that it will lead to greater impact (Kail and Abercrombie, 2013, p. 5).

Some of the challenges stem from knowing with which organisations to partner with in the first instance. Within formal alliances that have a shared sense of purpose, project partnering has been defined as:

> a relationship strategy whereby a project owner integrates contractors and other major contributors into the project. Through commitment to mutual project objectives, collaborative problem solving and a joint governance structure, partners pursue collaborative relationships, trust and improved performance (Børve *et al*., 2017, p. 694).

On the outset the definition appears to require some collective agreements which are not necessarily guaranteed in the collaborative context and it may serve best as a vision for successful collaborative working, even if achieving all points may prove unrealistic in

practice. While this definition seeks to simplify some of the inconsistent aspects of partner selection in projects, it may not be suitable for informal, and, or not-for-profit collaborations, or those which do not share a commercial entity. It is clear however that there is genuine requirement to invest resource, especially financial and time, to make such ventures successful, and doing so can bring valuable benefits (Kail and Abercrombie, 2013). One such potential benefit is the ability to learn from collaborating partners about organisational routines and skills that can be used by the individual organisation in a new collaborative situation, or new ways of doing things in general that have allowed for cost savings. Although working with other organisations might be driven by cost or by the increased outcomes for beneficiaries, some organisations are motivated to collaborate solely to acquire a new knowledge or skill set (Kail and Abercrombie, 2013). Learning within a collaboration is not just about what skills the individual organisation can gain but there are lessons to be learned from even the simplest collaborations. Evaluations of the collaboration might focus on the overall objectives and impact of the collective group but importantly they should link back to each individual organisation's reasons for participating in the first instance (Charity Commission, 2009, p. 20). As is found through the literature review in this research (Chapter 2), goal congruence is not a simple exercise; subsequently challenges and barriers are created with regard to devising an effective evaluation.

Successful collaboration does not generally happen by accident, and although there may be an element of doing things serendipitously, both practice and academic research on collaboration support that doing it well requires people with very particular skills (DCN, 2015). There are other examples of guidance for collaboration, especially inter-organisational collaboration. They present evidence for the many potential benefits it brings while caveating the difficulties and intense resource required to make them function in a manner that will produce at least some of the desired and intended outcomes:

> Without strong common purpose, a commitment to a whole system view, sharing power, and the ability to appreciate the service user's perspective, the barriers to collaboration are inevitably going to overwhelm and prevent the collaboration being successful. [The] lesson? It will not always work, and it certainly will not be easy, but it is worth a try (Miles and Trott, 2011, p. 8).

## *1.2 Research Background*

The researcher joined the host university to look at the space of collaboration and performance. Although the catalyst came from the researcher's own experiences of collaborative work in the tourism industry, it coincided with an invitation from the Clyde Regional Scout Council to evaluate a partnership project with Girlguiding and the Scottish Prison Service. This is known as the Kelvin Scout and Guide Club (KSGC).

The Clyde Scouts offered to partially sponsor research with a view to understanding how to best manage a collaborative project of this kind. Being 'a first' for Scouting in the UK, there was a need for them to be able to support the development and sharing of good practice and to help inform others how this might be rolled out as a wider project across the country. The rationale behind sponsoring it was to have an external and independent evaluation which the researcher undertook concurrently with literature reading of collaborative working.

The evaluation revealed that there was individual learning occurring and some learning at an organisational level but not at a collective, collaborative level. Similarly, it revealed there was some individual measurement of the collaboration's performance, but this was not achieved jointly nor collectively.

This, alongside the extant literature of the area, led to question how a joint performance measurement and management system would assist the collaboration to have learned more effectively.

### 1.2.1 Informing Research

During the evaluation process of the KSGC collaboration project several theoretical themes or phenomena were observed, leading to some considerations for an area of research. One aspect was to question what organisational learning or knowledge transfer has been occurring in the collaboration? How has it occurred and what if anything has been done with it? For example, has it been applied in another collaborative context (Bititci *et al.*, 2007)?

Some scholars have concluded that, because of its complexity and resource intensive nature, collaborative working is best avoided if at all possible (Huxham, 2003; Huxham and Vangen, 2004; Huxham and Vangen, 2005).

This however does not address questions of collaborating as something worth doing for experience. Exploration of emergent aims and outputs might be a good a reason as any for

collaboration, if the resource exists. An organisation might only be able to increase their ability to collaborate through learning from previous relationships and collaborations. While a shot in the dark collaboration would be risk taking, where the potential opportunity or value is not understood or known, exploration of it could bring some unexpected profit. Thus, it is not unreasonable to question 'Do collaborations or individual organisations learn to collaborate better and how?'

There was no continuous measurement to avoid inertia in the KSGC case; it would presumably therefore be more difficult to know if there was still value in exploring and continuing with the collaboration and the impact of any outputs. Similarly, it would be a challenge to know if there is a stage where it would be sensible to exit or if there is a continuous cycle of improvement; striving for continuous collaborative advantage as the dynamics shift. If there was a shared performance system monitoring various aspects of the collaboration, not just measuring outputs and outcomes, would that have been something that could have encouraged more meaningful organisational learning?

## *1.3 Aim and Objectives*

Research within management of inter-organisational collaborations demonstrates the complexity and multitude of themes that exist within such projects. Reflective practice has required a theoretical understanding of each of these themes in isolation to better grasp what the options are in the decision-making process as the project seeks a positive outcome known as a collaborative advantage (Huxham and Vangen, 2005).

The driver for this research is to consider if a complex inter-organisational collaboration had an agreed performance management and measurement (PMM) system in place, would it have improved its potential to achieve collaborative advantage through organisational learning? Observing the phenomena through an organisational control lens, this research considers performance measurement and management a mechanism that can facilitate organisational learning in an inter-organisational collaboration. Therefore, through combining collaborative advantage and organisational learning theories with that of performance measurement and management, this research aims to answer the question:

"***How does performance measurement and management impact organisational learning in the development of collaborative advantage?"***

The objectives of the study reflect the four stages that are required for the research. Firstly, to design the study, secondly to collect the data, thirdly to analyse the data and lastly to theorise the findings. This incorporates the following:

1. Through a review of the literature set out where the theories of collaborative advantage, organisational learning and performance measurement and management (PMM) intersect.
2. Create a study protocol that seeks:
    a. how organisational learning is facilitated in collaborative projects with a focus on the role of PMM.
    b. other possible factors involved in a collaboration that impact upon organisational learning when focusing on the role of PMM
3. Theorise the findings and to examine how they impact the current or future development of collaborative advantage.

## *1.4 Research Gap: Evaluating Complex Projects*

This chapter argues that collaborations have been and continue to be a source of valid academic research and the findings from studies have implications for practitioners across the private, public and third sectors. Scholars have sought to identify and theorise the phenomena that occur during organisational collaborations, including research that has been done to analyse the dynamic and often paradoxical themes at play during inter-organisational collaborative projects (Huxham, 2003; Huxham and Vangen, 2005; Vangen, 2017). Although these types of collaborations can achieve something beyond an individual organisation's capabilities, what seems to happen is that many collaborations meet frustrations, deliver output much slower than expected and, or, fall away (Huxham and Vangen, 2004; Bititci *et al.*, 2007).

> When people try to collaborate on everything, they can wind up in endless meetings, debating ideas and struggling to find consensus (Ibarra, 2011, p. 74).

Managing collaborations might be resource intensive and challenging, but can be rewarding, especially if the short-term cost driven efficiency decisions are overlooked in favour of the longer-term competitive advantage, which is argued to be a more sustainable strategy (Porter, 1996). Collaborations should be a relationship rather than an exchange mechanism (Kanter, 1994) and should aim to adopt a far less proprietary and far more holistic approach to the way

in which they manage their operations and plan for the future (Fyall, Leask and Garrod, 2001, p. 226). That said, there exists the danger that organisations engage in a 'collaborative overload' in which they dedicate too much resource to collaborative work in detriment to the effective outputs of individual working and even to the efficiency of the organisation as a whole (Cross, Rebele and Grant, 2016). The same authors further suggest that organisations should invest in executives who are dedicated to ensuring effective collaboration.

Whilst there is an established literature on collaboration there is little research on the evaluation of such endeavours, particularly from a public and third sector perspective. Even if it is presumed that each individual collaborating organisation has an independent set of performance criteria, the nature of shared performance measurement and the process by which such shared performance measures might be developed in not well understood (Busi and Bititci, 2006; Bititci *et al.*, 2012). It was hoped that through the evaluation of the KSGC that research might begin on addressing some of the knowledge gaps in this area. What the evaluation uncovered however was a collaboration struggling to agree on a number of issues such as identity, communication, objectives and leadership. There were no shared performance measures in place and as such evaluating the project was challenging, yielding very little empirical evidence on the nature of joint performance measures in the collaborative context. With the research interest still focused on learning in and through collaborations, the focus was directed through an organisational control lens from which both performance measurement and performance management derive.

## *1.5 Thesis Structure*

This introductory chapter has explained the background of the researcher and the research topic before setting out the research aims and objectives. The rest of the thesis is structured in five further chapters.

Chapter 2 is compiled of four sections. Firstly, a review of the extant literature on collaborative advantage theory is explored which confirms that there are areas of organisational learning in collaborations which are yet to be fully understood. This is followed by a wider review of organisational learning literature focusing on the knowledge of the phenomenon in an inter-organisational context. Thirdly, a review of the performance measurement and management literature establishes what is known of it as a facilitator of organisational learning and how this translates into a collaborative context. Lastly the findings of the literature review lead to a set of research propositions and a conceptual

framework which confirms the validity of the research question and guides the rest of the study design process.

Chapter 3 concerns the methodological options available for such a research project, defining the ontological and epistemological possibilities, before justifying the critical realist stance adopted by the researcher. This suits an abductive research strategy which allows for the testing of the literature-based propositions through analysis of the gathered empirical material while allowing for theory building through a more inductive process. Resulting from the adopted philosophical stance and research strategy, a multiple case study approach is selected. The case study design process, including case selection, data gathering techniques and finally data analysis techniques, are explained in the remaining sections of the chapter.

Chapter 4 lays out the gathered empirical material. It explains the chosen a-priori codes used for analysing the data within each case (within-case-analysis) before displaying the findings of each of the five cases. Having done this the chapter concludes with an explanation of the cross-case analysis techniques used to determine repeatable patterns across the cases.

This leads the reader onto Chapter 5 which discusses the cross-case findings with those of the extant literature review in Chapter 2. A possible pattern is identified across the cases that explains the relationship of social organisational controls, organisational learning and goal specificity. This pattern is then tested against the lifecycle of each of the cases used in the study to aid confirmation of its validity. Having demonstrated that the pattern is valid a theoretical model is created which visualises this. The model is further supported by newly created data driven theoretical propositions. The chapter concludes with a review of the literature review-based propositions, confirming three of these as theoretically valid statements.

Chapter 6 summarises the findings through contributions to theory, practice and context. Reflecting on the overall study the researcher discusses delimitations of the study before setting out future research possibilities.

# 2 Literature Review

## 2.1 Introduction

The first stage of the literature review for the research sets to establish what is currently known about the complexity and challenges encountered during inter-organisational collaborations. In effect, there is a requirement to identify the extant literature that explains what aspects of a collaboration require attention and management to make them successful, noting that success might be an entirely subjective concept in this context. Through an overview of the literature of the theory of collaborative advantage these aspects, or themes, that regularly require attention within collaborations can be identified.

As the initial research question is concerned with how learning occurs an inter-organisational collaboration the review looks at literature regarding forms of organisational learning across a wide spectrum with a focus on learning possibilities in an inter-organisational context. By treating learning as an output and, or, process of a collaboration, the research aims to identify how performance measurement and management facilitate organisational learning in collaborations. The review therefore visits the performance measurement and management literature to establish what is known of this as a facilitator of inter-organisational learning in a collaborative context.

## 2.2 Literature overview

Putting it simply 'Collaboration' means working together for mutual benefits (Parung and Bititci, 2008). Bititci *et al.* (2007, p. 456) define collaboration as 'a number of autonomous organisations working together, pooling and sharing resources, information, systems and risk for mutual benefit.' Other reasons cited in the literature for initiating a collaborating include: sharing costs, joint interest, external coercion, to create a virtual or formal permanent or temporary new organisation, and more besides (Proulx, Hager and Klein, 2014). Another known reason for going into collaboration is that organisations have failed in a solo project and there is no alternative other than to try and achieve the desired outcome collaboratively (Bryson, Ackermann and Eden, 2016). Studies into the phenomenon of collaboration try and understand what makes one collaborative relationship more successful than another (Barringer and Harrison, 2000). Among the terms used to describe when organisations collaborate successfully is achieving a 'collaborative advantage' (Huxham and Vangen, 2005). The extant literature still lacks fine grained detail and the mechanics of identifying collaborative advantage with much of the literature vague on how to actually create an

outcome that could be termed as having achieved collaborative advantage (Bryson, Ackermann and Eden, 2016) but it is considered to be creating gain beyond value creation or a competitive edge through an organisational alliance (Hibbert and Huxham, 2010).

The identified phenomena that occur during collaborations have been conceptualised through various themes that have built a descriptive theory known as the theory of collaborative advantage (Huxham, 2003; Huxham and Vangen, 2005). The themes within the theory have the ability to be applied more prescriptively. They have been explored to create conceptual handles for practitioners to recognise the key actions and actors within their own project that would put it at risk of collaborative failure instead of achieving collaborative advantage (Vangen and Huxham, 2010). Looking beyond the themes and their roles which have been extensively explored in the theory, the nature, impact and role of organisational learning processes as a descriptive theme and consequent conceptual handle requires further investigation. Developing this perspective will allow it to be used in isolation to help managers think through a problem, but, as with each identified perspective within the theory, it will be complex and overlap with the others in ever present combinations, influencing one another (Huxham and Vangen, 2005).

Organisational learning is in itself a vast research field, thus completing a conceptual handle for the theory of collaborative advantage potentially requires a considerable number of investigations of the phenomenon. Learning outcomes in a collaborative setting might be set out or remain as part of the hidden agenda, compromising of tacit and explicit knowledge transfer and, or, knowledge creation processes and each of these might merit their own respective macro and micro level research (Huxham and Hibbert, 2008). Organisational learning is also concerned with experiential learning processes (March, 1991; Holmqvist, 2004; Argote and Miron-Spektor, 2011) and there exists the possibility that the exploitation of such learning outputs can assist in increasing an organisation's collaborative capabilities (Zollo, Reuer and Singh, 2002; Bititci *et al.*, 2007), thereby having some sort of effect on the overall potential to reach collaborative advantage.

Given the complexity, this research focuses on facilitating effective organisational learning in the pursuit of collaborative advantage. The literature examines the extant themes within the theory of collaborative advantage, in doing so it concludes that there is further research required in the understanding and application of organisational learning as both a theme and a

conceptual handle within the theory. Having explored how organisational learning is currently presented within collaborative advantage theory, the research has been guided to analyse the organisational learning literature which covers theories of experiential learning and knowledge creation and transfer. Applying an organisational control theory lens, performance measurement and management is considered as a facilitator of organisational learning which has led to a review of the extant literature of performance measurement and management theory in a learning and collaborative context.

## 2.3 Collaborative Advantage

As introduced in the literature overview (section 2.2), the theory of collaborative advantage comprises of isolating multiple theoretical themes which exist in the phenomenon of collaborations. It seeks understanding of not only how they exist in themselves but how they interact with the with each other during the lifespan of a collaboration. The overlapping of these themes will, by definition, have an impact on developing organisational learning as a theme and possible conceptual handle of the theory. Before laying out what is known of organisational learning, the following key themes deemed most relevant to this research are discussed: Dynamic Change, Leadership in Activities and Structure, Goal Setting, Trust Building, Power Sharing, Collaborative Fatigue.

Collaborative projects in industry exist in both public and private sector settings (Hawkins and Little, 2011). Collaborations emerge when there is a belief that by working together there can be some sort of competitive advantage achieved, and has been described as 'the situation when participants work together to pursue a meta-mission while also pursuing their individual missions' (Huxham and Macdonald, 1992, p. 53). Collaboration across all sectors is not uncommon; the opportunities to collaborate are countless providing there is constructive management of differences between the actors (Gray, 1989), and while not all problems that arise in such relationships are avoidable some can be predicted and therefore mitigated through design and nurture (Berger, Cunningham and Drumwright, 2004). Through action research spanning many years (Huxham and Vangen, 2004), the theory of collaborative advantage focuses on a conceptual description of the complex micro-processes of participation in collaborative initiatives (Huxham and Beech, 2003). As previously highlighted, these initiatives look to achieve one or more outcomes which would otherwise be limited by an organisation's own resources and expertise (Hibbert and Huxham, 2005; Huxham and Vangen, 2005).

For Huxham and Vangen (2004), the theorisation of the themes provides a dual basis for thoughtful action by firstly legitimising the pain and isolation people feel in these situations, and secondly, they provide conceptual handles as a basis for action. The perspectives can be used in isolation to help managers think through a problem, but these are complex and overlap with others, therefore a combination of themes is always present. Mohr and Spekman (1994) identified five attributes of partnership working; commitment, coordination, trust, communication and conflict resolution. Although it is further suggested by Gazley (2010a, p.

668) that ‘partnership performance depends on the mutuality of interests and quality of goals, and the quality of organisational and personal relationships’, through deeper studies of the complex tensions and paradoxes that exist, the theory of collaborative advantage has shown that management of collaborative projects is not a readily prescriptive task (Huxham and Vangen, 2005; Vangen and Huxham, 2011). The theory can however be identified as both descriptive and prescriptive. Its essence is the former as it is unravelling the phenomenon of collaboration, but it has an ability to be applied prescriptively as it gives practitioners an insight into what is involved in collaboration and how one might best manage their collaborative project (Vangen and Huxham, 2010). It is in then, in this sense, creating a pro-active attitude towards managing a collaboration, while recognising there is a complexity that underlines collaborative situations (Huxham and Vangen, 2004). When collaborations do not gain a collaborative advantage, they are slipping into what is known as collaborative inertia (Huxham and Vangen, 2000b). Therefore, in developing the theory, the key question for Huxham and Vangen (2004, p. 91) was and remains: ‘If achievement of collaborative advantage is the goal for those who initiate collaborative arrangements, why is collaborative inertia so often the outcome?’ The following sections discuss the themes of the theory most relevant to this research.

### 2.3.1 Dynamic change: Membership structures

Membership structures and dynamics in an inter-organisational collaboration contribute to the potential of achieving collaborative advantage or inertia (Huxham and Vangen, 2000a).
It is generally agreed that lack of understanding of collaboration structure and dynamics is the major cause of failure of collaborative initiatives (Busi and Bititci, 2006, p. 11). While who is involved in collaboration is important to avoid inertia, the term ‘membership’ of a collaborative process is more complex and ambiguous than simply identifying the key stakeholders; there is difficulty in selecting which members will lead to effective collaboration (Huxham and Vangen, 2000a; Hibbert and Huxham, 2005) while omission of relevant stakeholders invites political difficulties during subsequent implementation (Gray, 1989, p. 919). This implies an ambiguity throughout the collaborative structure, even in the use of ‘member’ as it means both the individual and the membership organisation, which highlights a tension in what is more important; the membership organisation or the individual representing that organisation. How the individual views their responsibility and loyalty to their organisation will have a baring, as will the organisations overall attitude to the collaboration in question (Huxham and Vangen, 2000a). In any case, it is not always easy to

identify all stakeholders involved in collaborations as not all will be involved simultaneously and may be relatively unknown (Gray, 1985).

Collaborations are dynamic structures that are multifaceted and although they move through stages, consecutive phases of a collaborative process may not be linear (Austin and Seitanidi, 2012b) therefore any design will require an iterative process. Examples of the changes that occur throughout a collaboration include, but are not limited to:

- Active participants changing to observers
- Individual changes job
- External pressures influencing collaboration purpose and/or collaborative membership (Huxham and Vangen, 2000a).

Beech and Huxham (2003) argue there are a melee of identity cycles within a collaboration and that by recognising these within the collaborative nurturing process the threat of inertia is reduced. Identity theory has been discussed as either 'essentialism' or 'constructionism'. The former shows identity traits as being fixed and stable, the latter that identities are dynamic, subject to change through intervention or interpretation of others. Even if membership of the collaboration is stable and crystallisation of the collaboration identity does happen there is always the threat of change at the micro level. The cycles are a dynamic array of how one actor identifies themselves based on how they wish to be seen but also how they presuppose they will be identified by another or others in the group. Austin and Seitanidi (2012a, p. 937) report that it goes through cycles of stability by assessing internal and external factors to determine the way it will be structured and operate. Going through a design process aids purpose congruency, which 'contributes to organisational compatibility and generates 'interaction' value'.

When members are involved that represent multiple stakeholders, some not necessarily connected to the given collaboration, there exists difficulties in representation, that is, it is difficult to know who or what they represent at any given time (Huxham and Vangen, 2000a). Collaborations draw in the traditions of organisations and the individual members, this can have a bearing on how the collaboration is structured an operated and can become a source of conflict and tension. Recognising and learning of partner's traditions; authoritative, process and content, is one way that conflict of tradition can be nurtured and used to reimagine a different future (Hibbert *et al.*, 2010).

As all collaborations are dynamic to the extent they will gradually reform, they are sensitive to transformations in each of the partner organisations and therefore may change very quickly (Huxham and Vangen, 2004). Given that structures are dynamic, ambiguous and complex, Huxham and Vangen (2000a) suggest it is best not to delve too thoroughly into the matter of designing a collaboration structure. The makeup and changes in the membership of a collaboration affect many of the key themes in collaboration and can lead to inertia if not managed. A nurturing process is therefore required indefinitely, and some membership structures may change so much that the partnership is arguably different to the original collaboration (Huxham and Vangen, 2004).

### 2.3.2 Governance and Leadership

The form of network governance adopted, and the tensions therein, have been used to explain network effectiveness (Provan and Kenis, 2008). These tensions include focusing on the inputs or the outputs of the collaborative network; focusing on internal or external legitimacy; and the question of flexibility versus stability.

The control of a collaboration is not always in the hands of the members, so leaders have to be more in control of the design of the structure and processes put in place if they want to lead. They will need to try and understand the nature of the collaborative structure and recognise that traditional hierarchies are unlikely to exist in a collaboration (Huxham and Vangen, 2004). Leadership therefore is concerned with mechanisms that lead to the actual outcomes of a collaboration, namely the formation and implementation of policy and activity agendas (Huxham and Vangen, 2004). Structures and processes lead agenda as much as participants, so in this sense leadership is not only enacted by people. Structural processes can be imposed by headquarters or government or funding body, and they can also be in place from previous agendas so are not always designed by current members. Adding further complexity, Huxham and Vangen (2004) note that individual leaders might be an external stakeholder and would not necessarily be leading from a position of authority.

Leadership can be unclear in a non-imposed, informal collaboration. Whereby if a collaboration is mandated, hierarchical, and, or, formal, then there is likely to be a leadership structure in place, and elements of the collaboration will be coerced or imposed (Thomson and Perry, 2006). In the horizontally structured, self-imposed, informal collaboration this is likely to be less clear. There is a responsibility to accept a mutual decision-making process,

which can be possible with a high commitment to resolve a collective action issue (Gray, 1989; Jang, Feiock and Saitgalina, 2016). It is thought that formality in collaborations is more likely when the organisations involved have more experience, a larger budget or access to formal funding streams such as governments (Guo and Acar, 2005). For Vangen and Huxham (2003) collaborative leadership 'involves the management of a tension between ideology and pragmatism'. This may, on occasion, prove to be the case but Vangen's own studies have promoted and developed the idea of collective leadership. Indeed, Ospina and Foldy write (quoted in Vangen, Diamond and Keynes, 2016, p. 11):

> Collective leadership turns upside down the basic assumptions about the source, object, and end result of leadership. The source of leadership is not exclusively the leader; it may also be the groups of the structures and processes devised to advance the shared goal. The object of leadership is not the follower or the groups but the work to create an environment that is full of leadership - an environment where everyone can contribute in an ongoing community with capacity to collaborate on - and jointly produce collective achievements. Collective leadership thus offer an excellent lens to understand and practice leadership in today's shifting government arrangements (Ospina and Foldy, 2015, p. 495).

Further to this, Ospina (2016, p. 7) concludes that 'the end result of leadership is the capacity generated in these environments for its community members to effectively collaborate and produce results together.' Collective leadership exist therefore 'one level up from the individual or the relationship, at the system of relationships—the collective. Individuals' decisions, interactions, and actions are embedded there, which is where leadership emerges.' This view means that leadership exists is in a system of relationships that reflects that of the collective.

Leadership in collaborations, collective or otherwise, will be closely linked to how it is governed. Governance has the ability to impact on collaborative effectiveness (Zollo, Reuer and Singh, 2002) where 'the governance of a collaborative entity entails the design and use of a structure and processes that enable actors to direct, coordinate and allocate resources for the collaboration as a whole and to account for its activities' (Vangen, Hayes and Cornforth, 2015, p. 1244). When considering a governance structure it is argued that collaborative ventures should spend time searching for an equilibrium of governance, administration, mutuality, norms, and autonomy, in other words, a balance of structure, social capital and agency (Thomson and Perry, 2006). According to Zollo, Reuer and Singh (2002) it is better

to have a governance mechanism which is not equity based in order to increase effectiveness of collaborative agreements. Equity is an overall ownership of a collaboration whereas non-equity involves governing through a contract base. In equity alliances incentive alignment and control mechanisms are in place, and require less focus, these are considered settled when re-partnering with an organisation. Those collaborations with a non-equity structure spend more time and are more explicit in their mechanisms and these have a greater influence on effectiveness. Those with experience of each other may see less need to explore formal control mechanisms, however, partners should be aware that changes in the external environment affects how a collaboration is governed. Cornforth, Hayes and Vangen (2014) show it is possible to change the governance structure in order for a collaboration to survive and putting a more participative model in place might be beneficial in encouraging a longer-term commitment to a collaboration (Vangen, Hayes and Cornforth, 2015).

There is a discussion between the tension of efficiency versus inclusiveness in the ways of governing a collaboration (Provan and Kenis, 2008; Cornforth, Hayes and Vangen, 2014; Vangen, Hayes and Cornforth, 2015). 'Inclusiveness' favours a shared and participatory governance model and on the other side an 'efficiency' model is a lead-organisation model. The 'inclusiveness' approach calls for an open structure of membership and it may become more challenging to agree joint agendas and to coordinate action, lacking clear accountability. Positively though the open structure increases flexibility in the collaboration to utilise the available resource and encourages action where there is an overlap of collaborative and individual goals. A 'tight' model would reduce the influence of multiple stakeholders on the agenda but can lead to greater efficiency (Provan and Kenis, 2008; Cornforth, Hayes and Vangen, 2014; Vangen, Hayes and Cornforth, 2015). Models of governance in a collaborative setting need to take into account the dynamic and tension ridden complexity of collaborations beyond any resistance to change or a lack of collaborative entrepreneurial skill (Takahashi and Smutny, 2002; Cornforth, Hayes and Vangen, 2014). A governance model may 'need a structure that is tight enough to allow for consensus-oriented decision-making yet open enough to ensure continuing inclusion of enough stakeholders to help sustain the collaboration over a period of time' (Vangen, Hayes and Cornforth, 2015, p. 1258).

In the actual activity of a collaboration, below any governance model and leadership of agendas, Huxham and Vangen (2004) say there are two types of leadership activity in collaborations, these are described as working as either of the following:

- In the spirit of collaboration: embracing, empowering, involving and mobilizing members
- Towards collaborative thuggery: manipulating agendas and playing politics.

The argument is that both types are necessary; sometimes to nurture a garden and other times to cut back the overgrowth and pull up the weeds.

Huxham and Vangen (2000b) are inconclusive as to the merits of using terms 'leadership' and 'leader' in the practice-based theory although they have attempted to conceptualise the idea of leadership activities in order to move a collaboration forward. Leading in a collaboration is disrupted by constant difficulties and dilemmas with choices of decision often paradoxical in nature (Huxham and Vangen, 2000b; Vangen, Diamond and Keynes, 2016).

### 2.3.3 Goals and Goal Setting

Theory of collaborative advantage literature takes a broad definition of goals and generally it does include aspirations, visions, missions and purpose under the term 'goal' (Vangen and Huxham, 2011, p. 733).

Clarification of aims, objectives and goals sound an obvious key to successful collaboration yet many collaborators continue to highlight it as an issue; clarifying objectives is not as simple as it may sound (Huxham and Vangen, 1996). Purpose setting in multi organisational groups carries particular characteristics from goal setting per se (Eden and Huxham, 2001) while it has been argued that successful implementation of collaborative agreements is contingent upon the stakeholders' collective ability to positively manage changes in their contextual environment (Gray, 1985, p. 931).

Goals within a collaborative setting are multi-layered and involve the collaboration, the collaborating organisations, and the participating individuals (Huxham and Vangen, 1996; Eden and Huxham, 2001; Vangen and Huxham, 2011). The notion of having multiple goals and goal levels in an organisation is not new. The complexity of goals in decision making and organisational behaviour is discussed by Simon (1964), who writes of the differences between understanding the multiple sub-goals, decisions and constraints that exist when attempting to achieve a particular organisational goal. England (1967) wrote of there being a sub-set of organisational goals of which the importance attributed to them varies throughout the hierarchical levels of the organisation. Further to this, England (1967, p. 116) states:

‘organisational goals cannot be understood without taking into account the personal goals, personal values, and motives of individuals that exist within the organisations.’

Goal achievement by either the individual or the organisation in a collaboration is sought as it cannot be done through the individual themselves nor the organisation for which they represent or by which are employed (Thomson and Perry, 2006; Vangen and Huxham, 2011). This as might be expected dovetails with the notion of achieving a collaborative advantage as defined above. Knowing what success in a collaboration looks like may require a multi-constituency approach; multiple statements of effectiveness, that can be used to measure the criteria applied by the various constituents involved to a greater or lesser degree with the organisation. A constituent is not necessarily directly involved in the action in question but has some influence or concern with it (Connolly, Conlon and Deutsch, 1980, p. 213). Similarly, from a stakeholder theory point of view looking to achieve goals will not necessarily be a ‘win-win’ nor a ‘lose-lose’ but collaborations should strive to satisfy everyone optimally before accepting a sub-optimal outcome (Bryson, Ackermann and Eden, 2016). Success should go beyond a single set of evaluation criteria or a single statement of organisational effectiveness, which is particularly relevant to goal setting where there is only modest consent (Connolly, Conlon and Deutsch, 1980). When working towards achieving collaborative advantage it is also possible to define some meta-objectives which are beyond the remit of the individual organisations, particularly in collaborations that perceive themselves as having a responsibility to society (Huxham and Macdonald, 1992).

Goals can be broken into three levels of whom (Huxham and Vangen, 1996; Eden and Huxham, 2001):

- 1st Level: Meta-goals, the goals for the collaboration; a statement of what it is aiming to achieve.
- 2nd Level: Individual goals for each participating organisation; for example, a way to leverage more funding.
- 3rd Level: Individual goals for members of individual organisations; for example, job security.

The difficulty in managing these is that not all the goals are brought out into the open, with some joining for a hidden agenda or benefit, not caring so much for the real purpose of the collaboration. Goals on each level are labelled as explicit, assumed, and hidden (Huxham and Vangen, 2004). This uncertainty can cause confusion and tension and it might be that hidden

goals are the incentive for an organisation to collaborate in the first place (Huxham and Vangen, 1996; Huxham and Vangen, 2004). It can also be said that an individual representing an organisation with its own aims, agendas or structures will restrict that member (Huxham and Vangen, 2000a). Gazley (2010a) supports the belief that satisfaction from collaborative performance is driven through well communicated and congruent goals among the partners but also goes on to add that there needs to be a perceived proportionate effort to achieve these. This view however does not seek to engage the view that organisations have different reasons for being involved and that their representatives often seek different outputs. Gazley (2010a) does back up the notion that tensions are created when some members are reluctant to fully commit while others are very keen to influence and control a joint agenda (Huxham and Vangen, 2004).

The indeterminate nature of timescales that often exist in collaborative projects make goal setting and attainment complicated. This difficulty is further exasperated in collaborations by the number of individuals and individual organisations which are involved. In these situations there is often not a hierarchical authority to lead the relationships, and even if there is a hierarchy, for example, in a formal contractual situation, this is not in a single organisational setting (Vangen and Huxham, 2011), thus, tensions exist in cultural norms and values. Where there is a multitude of goals it has been reported that policy and decision makers win out the argument over more objective reasoning (Samset, Andersen and Austeng, 2014). Having the goals brought out into the open might just make the individual goals seem incompatible with the collaboration, it is therefore not surprising that sometimes aims are never agreed, leading to irreconcilable differences (Huxham, 1996; Huxham and Vangen, 2004). These discussions can also be complicated by language and communication, and, responsibility and accountability to other external stakeholders (Huxham and Vangen, 2004).

If goals are too wide they dilute the efforts, too narrow they might not satisfy all participants and there has to be at least enough agreement about broad aims and about detailed actions to allow the joint initiative to progress (Huxham and Vangen, 1996). Manipulating individual identity can be one way of successfully getting partners to buy into the purpose of the given collaboration (Beech and Huxham, 2003), so it is argued that a collaboration should create, at minimum, a strategy which does not conflict and at best, create a joint strategy (Huxham and Macdonald, 1992). Achieving a joint strategy or an alignment of goals may add to the commitment given to the collaboration (Thomson and Perry, 2006; Vangen and Huxham,

2011) but it is in diversity that greater synergy and value in collaboration is open to (Vangen and Huxham, 2011). This paradox is to be fully expected as it runs through collaborative management.

In mapping the 'goals paradox' that exists in collaborative projects Vangen and Huxham (2011) highlight that goals can be grown from within the collaborative setting, that is internally, or they can be imposed by the external environment; stakeholders who have authority such as governments or funders. Collaborators can also disguise goals by claiming to be trying to achieve something, in order to secure funding for example, but internally be working towards achieving something else. Goal overtness varies too as organisations and individuals can either be deliberately withholding their purpose for collaboration from partners or unintentionally have not discussed it, for instance through poor communication or assumption. This complexity in managing collaborations has been described as the 'tangled web of goals' (Vangen and Huxham, 2011). Bryson, Ackermann and Eden (2016) further identified goal types that complicate the picture during a collaboration. When participants are explicitly seeking to avoid an undesirable outcome then this can be described as 'a negative-avoidance goal'. They explain that military collateral damage can be considered as a negative-avoidance goal, it is a likely outcome of the operation but one that should have the risk of occurring reduced. Another goal type is 'not-my-goals.' These are those that are not claimed by another organisation in the collaboration, perhaps one of the many hidden goals or agendas that are part of the tangled web of goals described by Vangen and Huxham (2011).

The broad definition of goals in this setting places it in among the other themes of the theory of collaborative advantage. As discussed, the dynamic change of collaborations, internally in membership, or in the external environment will directly impact the collaborative purpose and the goals that exist within it. This is especially true if individual members or participating organisations change. As a collaboration progresses and, or, evolves through time it is not unexpected that goals will also evolve or even emerge through the collaborative action taking place (Kaul, 1988; Vangen and Huxham, 2011). It is claimed that goal categories can assist in identifying what collaborative advantage will mean as an individual organisation and as a collaborative group. In a public sector context, it states that the goals should look beyond the shared core ones to public values (Bryson, Ackermann and Eden, 2016).

Keeping with a notion that goals in collaborative settings are a paradox, this nature of them can bring unexpected benefits, but conversely it can lead to frustration and if not addressed, collaborative inertia. Goal congruence in collaborations might therefore be limited, whereas goal diversity and complexity are embedded in the very nature of collaborations (Vangen and Huxham, 2011). Individual sections of the collaborative system do not necessarily need to have the same overall objective or goal; however they do need to be complimentary so as not to sub-perform as an overall network (Bititci *et al.*, 2003). 'Joint action does not necessarily imply the need for joint goals' (Winkler, 2006, p. 121) and although joint goals and goal congruence might be desirable, it is questionable in its prerequisite to enjoy collaborative success.

#### 2.3.3.1 Value

Value creation through a collaboration is yet to be fully understood (Austin and Seitanidi, 2012b). Value in interorganisational relationships should go beyond a simple cost/benefit analysis and look at more tacit gains such as reputational value, knowledge gain, and broadened social networks (Barringer and Harrison, 2000). Bryson, Ackermann and Eden (2016) suggest that goal setting in collaborative advantage in a non-profit situation should go beyond the shared goal to incorporate public value goals to help strategies in practice that assist in public organisations fulfilling their roles while non-profit networks should be measured on their effectiveness in satisfying the needs of stakeholders and constituents (Provan and Milward, 2001).

Accepting the understanding that value is what the customer gets in return for investment (Zeithaml, 1988; Parung and Bititci, 2008) and leading on from understanding the complexity of goals within collaborative settings, Bititci *et al.* (2004) propose four types of value that are created through and from inter-organisational collaborations (Table 2:1).

| Value Created | Meaning |
|---|---|
| Shareholder value | The value proposition of each member to its shareholders – equivalent to internal value as defined in the value creation literature. |
| Individual value (Personal and Organisational) | Where participating members can leverage what is created in the collaboration to enhance their own offering and reputation to its end customer. This could be broken further into levels of organisational and individual participants |
| Intra-collaborative value proposition | This value represents what each participating member adds to the internal functions and capabilities of the collaboration. Essentially what each-member brings to the table as a resource |
| Collaborative value proposition | The value created as a whole collaborative unit; what it can offer to external customers or stakeholders. |

**Table 2:1 Collaboration Value Proposition**
*(*Adapted from Bititci *et al.,* 2004)

The important thing is to encourage close relationships and create more value among participants by contributing particular resources (Parung and Bititci, 2008, p. 669). Similarly, the four types of value identified by Austin and Seitanidi (2012a; 2012b) are linked to not only what they can achieve together but what is in it for the individual organisation, with parts of the value linked to knowledge acquisition, either transferred or created, and either tacit or explicit. The four are:

- Associational (credibility that comes from having an association with another organisation)
- Transferred (receiving from another partner, tangible or explicit resource, that can increase or decrease in value over time)
- Interaction (co-created value, for example, knowledge, trust, relational capital)
- Synergistic (compatible use of resource to accomplish more together than they could have done separately).

Value can be created through non-profit collaborations when benefits exceed costs and, as such, the reason to engage in collaborations is down to the belief that the results and mutual benefits will justify the resource (Guo and Acar, 2005; Thomson & Perry, 2006; Jang, Feiock and Saitgalina, 2016). Questions still exist surrounding the value for which non-profit organisations participate in voluntary-based informal collaborative arrangements, there is only a limited understanding of this arrangement over a contract-based formal arrangement

(Jang, Feiock and Saitgalina, 2016). There are only a few examples of literature that explicitly exam this type of arrangement (Guo and Acar, 2005; Gazley, 2008; Gazley, 2010b; Jang, Feiock and Saitgalina, 2016), possibly due to the perception that non-profit collaborations are formal arrangements, imposed top-down (Jang, Feiock and Saitgalina, 2016). One reason for engaging in this type of self-organised informal collaboration is the belief that there are many situations that require collective action that can be better resolved at a locally organised collaboration, rather than something more formal or centralised (Jang, Feiock and Saitgalina, 2016).

According to Austin and Seitanidi (2012b) the potential for co-creating value is increased when there is a synergy between the self-interest of the collaborators and the value they are creating for each other and the wider social good; the values may vary from selfish to altruistic (Bryson, Ackermann and Eden, 2016, p. 913). It is put forward that value in collaborations is created through careful design, experimentation and organisational experience; potential collaborators that take the time to assess their organisational fit have been shown to create better value and can act as a predictor of partnership longevity (Austin and Seitanidi, 2012a, p. 935). Collaborative ventures need to spend time searching for an equilibrium among governance, administration, mutuality, norms, and autonomy, in other words the structural, social capital and agency dimensions (Thomson and Perry, 2006) and should avoid subjective measurements of success (Thomson, Perry and Miller, 2009). Placing this type of approach alongside the findings of the TCA would mean that there would have to be an anticipation that the design will not be disrupted by any form of collaborative inertia, and that it would require and receive dedicated iteration and nurturing.

### 2.3.4 Trust Building

Trust building between collaborators is important and requires attention (Huxham and Macdonald, 1992). Identity formation is very much linked to the levels of trust between actors within the collaboration (Beech and Huxham, 2003) however, as Huxham and Vangen (2004) note, collaborations often cannot choose their partners. This can be seen in government established collaborations or when the private sector is forced into partnership in order to defeat a competitor. It has been shown that there is a positive relationship between identity construction and trust development (Zhang and Huxham, 2009). In collaboration, a constructionist view weakens the trust building exercise if confidence in a constant behaviour is a threat. Likewise, essentialism can be a threat to trust building if the individual is wrongly labelled (Beech and Huxham, 2003).

Building trust is necessary either through formal arrangements or risk taking (Huxham and Vangen, 2004) and perceptions of power and trust can be managed in a collaboration by working towards achieving a small win. Realising a more achievable ambition can help to build trust; trust is created as inter-organisational and inter-personal relationships grow through evidence of success in joint actions (Huxham and Vangen, 1996). The dynamic nature of collaborations though means that the trust building loop is very fragile and changes to key individuals or organisations may break this cycle, again highlighting that the nurturing process must be continuous and permanent (Huxham and Vangen, 2004).

Although much of the focus is on the influence that interorganisational trust has on the overall relationship in collaborations, it is important to note the effects on interorganisational trust that interpersonal trust play; shared ideology and norms among individuals contribute to collaboration commitment and development of consensus (Tsasis, 2009, p. 17). Socialisation is a key tool in growth of familiarity between the actors of participating organisations within the collaboration for growing common values and an understanding of working practice (Das and Teng, 1998). Supporting the idea of a trust building loop, that small wins can help achieve an increase in trust, Zacharia, Nix and Lusch (2011) suggest that, to build confidence and trust in a partnership, the focus should be on operational success first before managing relationships. This seems to extend the assertion of Das and Teng (1998, p. 507) who say: 'trust and control are two alternative sources in developing confidence in partner cooperation, although the two are not linked by a simple complementary relationship.'

### 2.3.5 Power

Difficulties in trust are closely linked to the issue of power in collaborations. The perception among members is that power lies with those with financial control but everyone has the power of exit unless legal obligations are in place. The observed reality is that people act as though their perceptions are real (Huxham and Vangen, 2004). Huxham and Vangen (2004) discovered that there are various points of power. These are more subtle than financial strength and exist at a micro level, not obvious to those involved. Some of these include:

- Naming – the name influences what the collaboration does
- Invitations – those who chose who to invite and more so the ones who chose the invitation process
- Chair/Facilitator – person is in power but more so those who chose the facilitator

- Meetings – whose premises is it in, location, time – those that control this are in power.

Another crucial element highlighted by Huxham and Vangen (2004) is that power shifts continually at the micro level. Network managers, often a paid employee, hold a lot of power in between meetings as they have the collaboration as their main concern. There is continuous decision making throughout a collaboration, but those who have power to change priorities can also be external stakeholders such as government interventions (Huxham and Vangen, 2004). Being aware of, managing and responding to the shifting power at a micro level requires an acceptance that manipulative behaviour is appropriate, though some would argue that kind of behaviour or action is against the spirit of collaborative behaviour and leads to a question of effective leadership (Huxham and Vangen, 2004).

The bargaining power of an organisation increases as it acquires knowledge from another, reducing the need for partnership working and collaboration (Inkpen and Beamish, 1997). This is further in line with the research done by Hibbert and Huxham (2005) into learning attitudes and stances which explain some of the reluctance and deliberate withholding of knowledge from partners in a collaboration, protecting their own worth. This also suggests that a partner may choose to engage in collaboration to deliberately acquire knowledge from another organisation. This has a direct impact on trust and the stability of any such alliance, although is also dependent on the ability to capture and absorb what is available as knowledge. Bargaining power viewed through knowledge transfer is possibly dynamic though, if new knowledge is gained by the 'giving' partner that the 'receiving' one requires access to, then the power shifts back (Inkpen and Beamish, 1997). Organisational learning and knowledge management is further discussed in Sections 2.3.7 and 2.4. This shows that power, like the other themes, is a dynamic force in collaborations.

### 2.3.6 Collaborative Fatigue and Inertia

Most within a collaboration will be aiming to achieve collaborative advantage, that is what they could not achieve by working alone, but they often end up with collaborative inertia, that is the rate of output being much slower than expected (Huxham and Vangen, 2000a) and therefore many inter-organisational relationships fail (Barringer and Harrison, 2000; Huxham and Vangen, 2005; Bititci *et al.*, 2007). Thomson and Perry (2006) are among those who caution against collaborating without due care and preparation. They say that collaborations are costly, engaging in it for the sake of an individual goal or for no real purpose is likely to result in failure and therefore without considering all the implications and complexities

involved it would be better to avoid collaboration. Collaborations often lead to frustrations which are born out of poor leadership at a local level (Rigg and O'Mahony, 2013).

It could be argued that the theory of collaborative advantage has its roots firmly in the work of Gray (1985, p. 932) who conclude on collaborative failure:

> … [the] inability to achieve the appropriate conditions during each phase may be the best source of explanations to date for why collaborative efforts fail. For example, premature efforts to structure collaborations can render them ineffective because the appropriate mix of stakeholders has not been identified or because those participating have not yet agreed on a common direction for the domain. And the fact that mandated collaborations are less effective than those entered into voluntarily, may be the result of premature efforts to structure those domains.

Poor leadership or management contribute to collaborative fatigue and ultimately inertia. Some of the more common causes, although not limited to, are:

- Negotiating joint purpose
- Communication
- Developing joint modes of operating
- Managing perceived power imbalances and associated problem of trust
- Managing accountability of partners in collaboration and to other constituents while maintain autonomy to make the venture work.
- Difficulties of logistics, for example, geographical differences.
  (Huxham and Vangen, 2000a).

A lack of determination, commitment and stamina will lead to collaborations floundering and succumbing to collaborative inertia. Commitment among organisations and individual members is variable, therefore achieving advantage is resource intensive (Huxham and Vangen, 1996). Some of these challenges are heightened when a collaboration is formed out of coercion (Rigg and O'Mahony, 2013). In a non-formal collaborative setting, once a partner has committed a great deal of resource, the others are perhaps tempted to disengage or reduce their own commitments. This tends to lead to tensions surrounding return on investment and commitment (Jang, Feiock and Saitgalina, 2016). If each member views its action locally and is unable to see the impact of its action on other members, then all partners suffer because the total benefit is diminished (Cao and Zhang, 2010, p. 364). The conclusion is that each of these areas of collaboration need a constant nurturing and that unless prepared to commit the

effort then it may be advisable to avoid collaborating in the first instance (Huxham and Vangen, 2005; Thomson and Perry, 2006).

### 2.3.7 Organisational Learning in the Theory of Collaborative Advantage

Elizabeth Lank (2005, p. 115) reflects: 'team learning means consciously taking time to reflect on experience, together, and ensuring the learning gained is used for improvement.' In practice though the underlying complexity of a collaboration may be influenced by attitudes to learning and desired learning outcomes. These learning outcomes have quite commonly been placed into categories of 'knowledge transfer' and 'knowledge creation' (Huxham and Hibbert, 2004). Team learning, or organisations learning together, can be understood as knowledge creation, but this is not to say that this is an entirely separate function from knowledge transfer. Knowledge transfer outcomes are linked to competitive advantage as one acquires that which has been spilled over while deliberately trying to conceal reciprocal transfer (Huxham and Hibbert, 2004). Intangible, or tacit, knowledge can be easily discarded, however, if it is managed as a product manufactured at great expense, it will be treated as a valuable asset and put to good use (Lank, 2005).

Within the collaboration context there is the potential for planned learning outcomes and unplanned, emergent outcomes (Huxham and Hibbert, 2004; Huxham and Hibbert, 2008), which supports Ingram's (2002, p. 642) assertion: 'Inter-organisational learning occurs when one organisation causes a change in the capacities of another, whether through experience sharing, or by somehow stimulating innovation.' A further influence on learning possibilities is cultural differences; – institutional, regional, and or national. This diversity may lead to unintended learning outcomes or innovation, for example a type of knowledge creation process. It may also lead to tensions that make the collaboration incompatible which, paradoxically, is a barrier to the potential knowledge capturing that may happen within the diversity (Huxham and Hibbert, 2004). Some differences have been found between goal defined projects, which have strong ties among fewer actors and better facilitate knowledge transfer, and projects with broader goals or co-innovation which have weaker ties and support knowledge creation (Huxham and Hibbert, 2004). The choice in structure of the collaboration impacts the types of social connections that exist between the actors. It is suggested more social engagement and a reduction in active management can overcome some of the barriers in local process learning. Structure may be in place to ensure desired learning outcomes of a

collaboration are achieved but these paradoxically can erect more barriers to the collective learning process (Hibbert *et al.*, 2010).

The requirement is therefore to research the balancing of tensions to give learning processes their full potential. Understanding how learning occurs needs to take into account the individual-centred, relational and societal aspects of situated processes (Antonacopoulou, 2006; Antonacopoulou and Chiva, 2007; Hibbert *et al.*, 2010). Knowing how to optimise the social connections and potential for learning within a collaborative setting is one way that the value of collaborations could be increased, across the individual, organisational and collaborative levels. In the collaborative setting it is thought that the attitudes, either of individuals or organisations themselves have influence of the processes of learning in collaborations. These attitudes are characterised by Huxham and Hibbert (2008) and shown in Table 2:2.

| Basic Attitudes | Generic Characterisations |
|---|---|
| Sidelining | Knowledge outflow and acquisition are passively not considered<br>*Learning from or with partners is not something we think about* |
| Selfish | Unidirectional knowledge outflow from a partner and acquisition only by the attitude-holder are actively preferred<br>*We take from you without giving to you* |
| Sharing – exchanging | Bi- or multidirectional knowledge outflow and acquisition are actively appreciated as sources of value in their own right<br>*We take from you and we give to you; you take from us and give to us* |
| Sharing – exploring | Bi- or multidirectional knowledge outflow and acquisition are actively preferred as necessary vectors in supporting the possible creation of *new* valuable knowledge<br>*We take from you and we give to you; you take from us and give to us – and we learn together to create knowledge* |

**Table 2:2 Learning Attitudes and their Characterisations**
(Huxham and Hibbert, 2008, p. 511)

Having taken a very broad view of the literature Huxham and Hibbert (2004, p. 16) suggest that the 'management style' of the collaboration can have an influence on learning attitudes. Lacking empirical evidence, they are able to conclude that 'at the relatively 'closely controlling' end of the spectrum, partners choose to undertake explicit management functions such as defining goals, specifying processes and evaluating progress. Conversely, at the relatively 'loosely controlling', participative end, networks are constituted through reflexive social practices.' They further posit that the controlling style is more conducive to a selfish learning attitude while participatory suits a sharing learning attitude and the associated

learning outcomes of either stance (Huxham and Hibbert, 2004; Huxham and Hibbert, 2008). Management style is one among many possible influences of learning attitude that includes, culture, prior experience and collaborative structure. These learning attitudes thus are: Selfish (exploiting) shared (exchange) shared (exploring) sidelined (excluded yet emerging), and how they interact with the collaboration leads to a knowledge transfer or knowledge creation outcome (Huxham and Hibbert, 2004; Huxham and Hibbert, 2008).

Knowledge form is among the characteristics defined in collaborative situations which affect the type of learning outcomes achieved (Huxham and Hibbert, 2004). Hibbert and Huxham (2005) try to categorise the types of learning that occur during a collaboration and set out three forms. These learning forms are:

1. Transferable process learning
2. Substantive learning
3. Local collaborative process learning.

Firstly, experiential learning, a transferable collaborative process, that is, taking the experiences from one collaborative context and applying them to other circumstances. In the second identified form of learning, Hibbert and Huxham (2005) categorise knowledge transfer and creation as substantive learning in collaboration, embedded in the attitudes of the organisation. Attitudes to learning have been identified as either sidelined, selfish or sharing but in action they are likely to involve a combination of two or more (Huxham and Hibbert, 2004). Selfish attitudes involve taking knowledge, sharing attitudes giving knowledge, therefore both are linked to knowledge transfer, while the sharing attitude between partners can lead to innovation, that is, knowledge creation. The complexity of partner learning attitude perception within a collaboration increases with a wider network. Added to this the individual may have different attitudes to that of their parent organisation, which ties in with the ambiguity of representation (Huxham and Vangen, 2000a). Similarly, if sharing attitudes of a member organisation in a collaboration is not mirrored within it as a separate entity then it has an impact on the dissemination of any knowledge transferred. This relationship that substantive learning has with outcome setting (Huxham and Hibbert, 2004) would suggest it can be explicit, implicit or intentionally hidden. Learning attitudes may not be static throughout the life of a collaboration as collaborations are shown to be dynamic. This being the case, a micro-level understanding of attitudes and their influences could be required to

understand a particular given context (Huxham and Hibbert, 2008). Through collaboration there is the possibility to increase transferable understanding and substantive knowledge (Hibbert and Huxham, 2005).

Local collaborative process learning is focused on understandings of the particular collaborative situation. The learning required for a collaboration to function at any level includes an appreciation of elements such as purpose, partners and processes, which participants gain as they progress the collaboration (Hibbert and Huxham, 2005). Process learning reduces the reliance on pre-judgements as experience of partners, processes and purpose grow (Hibbert and Huxham, 2005, p. 61). It also enables the possibility of knowledge creation and transfer, a substantive learning process:

> Process learning is a type, which, in addition, as collaborations begin to operate, substantive learning necessarily takes place alongside local process learning in order for partners to 'get jobs done'. Sometimes there may not be clear-cut distinctions between the two modes (Hibbert and Huxham, 2005, p. 66).

Those initiating or leading collaborative projects may find that their misplaced optimistic stance will create a barrier to learning from other sources to assist in making sensible decisions (Haji-Kazemi, Andersen and Klakegg, 2015). Although collaborating with others would create the impression of a willingness to co-operate and create knowledge, the evidence from studies of power and learning attitudes in collaborations show it is not a given (Huxham and Hibbert, 2004; Huxham and Vangen, 2005; Flyvbjerg, 2013).

Time can be spent learning about the other partners and trying to understand the reason that they are in the position collaborating, especially if it has been imposed or they have been invited along to engage on a project of about which they are not familiar (Hibbert and Huxham, 2005). Partner choice can be mandated, for example through a government initiative. Trying to learn about other partners is linked to the ambiguous nature of partner identity (Huxham and Vangen, 2000a). Non-virtuous learning may occur when there is much resource spent on learning many details about the other partners which prove to be of little value or an irrelevance. Das and Teng (1997) describe an initiation phase of collaboration and there is evidence that collaborations are develop emergently out of previous incarnations (Huxham and Vangen, 2000b). Where there is an initiation phase process learning can help in the partner selection with items such as compatibility of purpose and expertise. The initiation phase raises tensions of 'selfish' learning stance of a potential partner (Hibbert and Huxham,

2005). Learning is considered by some to be limited in the collaborative context where multiple tensions exist among participating individuals and organisations (Gherardi and Nicolini, 2002; Hibbert, Siedlok and Beech, 2016). Knowledge transfer between organisations in a collaborative setting are said to require a relationship of trust, curiosity, respect, diversity and the careful creation of conditions to generate the appropriate conditions. There is therefore a need to further develop understand the subtle factors which allow for, or are a barrier to, inter-organisational knowledge creation and transfer (Hartley and Benington, 2006, p. 107). Absence of trust and power imbalances can affect individuals' ability to seek clarification of understanding fearing it could undermine their position; concerns about the intentions of others with hidden aims, agendas and a selfish attitude to learning (Inkpen and Beamish, 1997; Hibbert and Huxham, 2005).

Conversely, greater social interaction in the intra-organisational setting has been shown to increase internal collaboration in innovation and knowledge creation (Howard *et al.*, 2016). Hibbert, Siedlok and Beech (2016) propose that giving space for communication among individuals, enables them to enact interpretation of events to differently understand a situation. Offering such space for dialogue creates opportunity for shared meaning and sensemaking (Weick, 1995; Myers and Sacks, 2001). Communication tools such as the emergence of social media is another way which knowledge can be exchanged through collaborations (Rathi, Given and Forcier, 2014). In intra-organisational projects, research has shown that learning from and between projects is accomplished through reflexivity, social engagement and being able to directly learn from previous experience in projects. This is more easily facilitated under an environment focused outcome and where learning is encouraged and given explicit orientation (Hartmann and Dorée, 2015). As previously discussed, there are tensions that exist in the paradox of goal congruence and goal diversity in collaborations. Goal congruence is a possible barrier to organisational learning as competitive conflicts of interest may lead to a reluctance to share information, and similarities in purpose may reduce the variety of knowledge and experience between partners. On the other hand, goal diversity could create a learning synergy by drawing on other resources (Vangen and Huxham, 2011). In a study of industrial firms, it was shown that an explorative learning orientation promotes co-innovation that fosters a firm's network collaboration whereas exploitative learning orientation is associated with process innovations, which, in turn, discourage network collaboration (Westerlund, Peters and Rajala, 2010). The question

remains how to capitalise on learning opportunities within a collaborative setting to ensure a competitive advantage (Peters *et al.*, 2010).

Evidence of transferable experiential learning occurring can be found in the research by Bititci *et al.* (2007). A 'synergy model' was created to determine an organisation's readiness and ability to enter into a collaboration. It showed that organisations who have already collaborated successfully are likely to have higher maturity levels (Bititci *et al.*, 2007, p. 463). The model is based on four elements, identified through literature, for successful collaboration: Strategic, Operational, Cultural and Commercial. Although these four levels or perspectives of the synergy model are labelled differently, they are reflected in the key themes of the theory of collaborative advantage and thus offer further evidence of being the key elements in successful collaboration. Strategic synergy asks companies to consider goals and aims for each individual collaborating partner, including their own, and the overall collaborative objectives. Operational strategy could be equated to system compatibilities in leadership and structure. Cultural differences and similarities are considered as a theme in the theory of collaborative advantage, but cultural synergy can also extend to trust building. Commercial synergy in this case would cut across themes of trust, risk and goal setting. Much like in the theory of collaborative advantage the perspectives designed in the synergy model are closely linked if not intrinsically dependent on one another for successful management of a collaboration. Although not explicitly mentioned in the synergy model research the findings would suggest that organisations are able to use their past experience to increase their maturity, that is, their ability to engage in collaboration. Arguably the most telling result of the synergy model research is that the many of the participating organisations using the tool to reflect on their readiness to collaborate did not reach their own self determined desired maturity levels for optimal collaboration.

There is uncertainty surrounding the firm's ability to learn how to collaborate more effectively from direct experience. A collaborative capacity, or maturity, has a positive effect on performance which suggests that experience in collaborations plays a role in the ability to collaborate well (Gazley, 2010a). It has been shown to be difficult to replicate experience in a new inter-organisational alliance, rather having experience of collaborating with the same organisation is what can improve overall collaborative effectiveness (Zollo, Reuer and Singh, 2002). Learning to improve at collaborative working through experience requires a pro-active desire to build and maintain relationships, the attitude and motivating factors need to be in

place to allow the individuals to want to learn to collaborate better in the future (Knight, 2000). Collaborating in an equitable structure with other partners is one way to break free from repeating past practices and to seek better alternatives (Hobbs and Andersen, 2001). It can thus be argued that creating repeatable best practice in joint ventures is not necessarily the most desirable learning outcome. However, there is evidence to suggest that only partner-specific experience, and not technology or general partner firm experience, has a positive impact on alliance performance and this is stronger when there is an absence of equity-based governance mechanisms, thus learning needs to go beyond 'learning by doing' (Zollo, Reuer and Singh, 2002, p. 709). Zacharia, Nix and Lusch (2011) find that the level of absorptive capacity is positively related to the level of collaborative process competence. This means the organisation's ability to acquire 'know how' tacit knowledge and their ability to manage collaborative process and make decisions. In the first instance, managers should focus on learning from experience and building a performance system for more successful collaborations, but it is not suggested however how this might be accomplished.

There are many cautionary warnings about entering into a collaboration (Huxham and Vangen, 2004) but developing a collaborative synergy and maturity through the experiential learning process, combined with other markers, could help assess whether there exists enough potential value to make the decision to collaborate (El Mokadem, 2010).

### 2.3.8 Forms of Collaboration

Where the TCA claims to be universally applicable to the variety of collaborative contexts that exist it does recognise that there might be nuanced differences depending on the type of collaboration or partnership under question (Vangen and Huxham, 2011). Supply chains, extended enterprises, virtual enterprises and clusters are just some of the terms used to describe inter-organisational working (Parung and Bititci, 2008).

This research focuses on not for profit inter-organisational collaborations. The chosen cases are mostly associated with the term 'cluster' which can be defined as geographic concentrations of interconnected and institutions in a particular field (Porter, 1998). In clusters, participants usually share data, information, resources and sometimes risks (Parung and Bititci, 2008). Clusters 'may by understood as contexts for interorganisational collaboration, defined as any process through which people work, across organisational boundaries, on areas of mutual interest' (Hibbert *et al.*, 2010, p. 454). Particularly relevant for

this research is that they are seen as contexts for collaborative learning processes (Hibbert *et al.*, 2010).

Given there is relatively little explicit attention given to informal, self-organised not for profit collaborations (Guo and Acar, 2005; Gazley, 2008; 2010b; Jang, Feiock and Saitgalina, 2016), then the context studied will focus on these forms of collaboration. It should be noted that there is a dubiety around the significance of a formal agreement in collaborative work; Gazley (2010a) found that there is a positive effect on success perception but not a direct effect on collaborative performance. The chosen context, however, should not limit the findings, as context in the TCA literature has had little bearing. This is because what is being studied shares characteristics with these other collaborative forms; creating value for the end customer (supply-chain), creating a unique competency to maximise the returns to each partner (extended enterprise), and dynamic partnership among companies that can bring together complementary competencies needed to achieve a particular business task, within a certain period of time (virtual enterprise).

### 2.3.9 Collaborations as a Paradox

The paradox lens is getting more attention in management science (Raisch *et al.*, 2009; Ospina and Saz-Carranza, 2010; Smith, 2011; Fairhurst *et al.*, 2016; Schad *et al.*, 2016; Vangen, 2016a). It is the preferred theoretical lens used in the development of the theory of collaborative advantage (Beech and Huxham, 2003; Ospina and Saz-Carranza, 2010; Vangen, 2016a). What it enables the researcher to do is to unravel and explain the tensions that exist within the lifespan of a collaboration by positioning the extremes of each theoretical 'theme' under discussion and thus describing the expectant behaviours which occur therein. Huxham and Beech (2003) say that the paradox lens is used when there are two extremes in the situation of tensions. Finding a solution somewhere in between can be the most practical way forward but it becomes difficult to define 'at least' or 'enough' to know how much agreement there should be before moving forward with the collaboration. Research findings using this lens define the two extreme tensions and reformulate them to make it work.

Goal unity versus diversity is an example of one of these extreme tensions and it represents a distinct challenge to the governance of collaborations; diversity provides the resources and unity ensures the capacity to use them (Ospina and Saz-Carranza, 2010, p. 356). Ospina and Saz-Carranza (2010) support that the paradox found in goal diversity tension in network management should be addressed considering the demands of both sides as opposed to being

resolved and by doing so collective action can be enabled. Using a different approach, Winkler (2006) says that both formal and informal mechanisms can be utilised to resolve goal conflict issues. This however neither resolves nor expands any potential paradox by labelling the various mechanisms used as 'complimentary' and describing them as being able to 'function in parallel', calling for a complex approach to goal conflict resolution.
Those who utilise the paradox lens (Huxham and Beech, 2003; Ospina and Saz-Carranza, 2010; Vangen, 2016a) say that tensions within collaborations created through paradoxes are a necessity to collaborative advantage, therefore, while the management of these is key, they cannot be resolved per se. When tensions exist, actors can choose to separate these opposing forces out and select one side over the other. In doing so the consequences are often negative, for example the reduction of learning or the triggering of defence mechanisms in others, serving only to highlight the need for the other opposing force (Vangen, 2017).

In another recent example, Vangen and Winchester (2014), present a cultural diversity paradox that is managed through a form of control. Cultural diversity cannot be managed in the recognition, research and reconciliation way as this would signify that cultural differences are recognisable and manageable. Instead it is presented that the most useful solutions are born out of the synergies created through this diversity:

- Extreme control leads to accountability to the organisation being represented, as opposed to complete autonomy.
- Extreme control leads to reducing the cultural diversity and a focus on the collaborative agenda as opposed to embracing the opportunity for diversification.
- Extreme control preserves the cultural resources but may lead to incompatible working structures (Vangen and Winchester, 2014)

Thus, cultural diversity is an example of something being both simultaneously an advantage and a source of inertia (Vangen, 2017). Although using a paradox lens in this example to search for descriptive theory and balance, Vangen and Winchester (2014) say that embracing flexibility, autonomy and complexity have a greater possibility of achieving a collaborative advantage. This suggests that even with a paradox lens one side of the tensions presented may be preferable to the other. Nonetheless, although the paradox lens continues to be used, in the extant literature with explicit links to the theory of collaborative advantage, organisational learning and knowledge management has not been researched in this way (Huxham and Hibbert, 2004; Hibbert and Huxham, 2005; Huxham and Hibbert, 2008; Hibbert *et al.*, 2010). Other recent collaborative theory literature explicitly linked to the theory of collaborative

advantage have taken other approaches, although not negating the existence of multiple tensions, but have not chosen or been able to apply a paradox lens to best describe the phenomena in question (See Cornforth, Hayes and Vangen, 2014; Vangen, Hayes and Cornforth, 2015; Vangen, Diamond and Keynes, 2016). It is notable that it is in both governance and learning literature that the paradox lens has not been applied. Barringer and Harrison (2000) support the need for a multi-dimensional theoretical view of inter-organisational collaborations. Testing propositions poses a number of challenges for research. To fully test them, a variety of methodologies will need to be used, including: action research, comparative case studies, natural experiments, and laboratory experiments. (Bryson, Ackermann and Eden, 2016, p. 923). Research has explored questions building on the findings of the theory of collaborative advantage using other methods, including explorative case study (e.g. Winkler, 2006). This research was open to the application of a paradox lens to develop the theoretical understanding of the phenomena in question but after careful consideration of the literature review findings and methodological options, an organisational control theory lens has been applied to the research.

### 2.3.10 Summary

There has been a focus on how to do partnerships and not on the outcomes and it has been difficult to attribute the impact of partnership working per se and there exists ambiguity surrounding results (Dickinson and Glasby, 2010). This further supports the feeling and conclusions that partnership working across agencies should be avoided unless necessary, and there is still much to learn about managing collaborations, including questions surrounding their learning and cyclical nature, power and accountability (McGuire, 2006). The research question concerns learning in collaborations. There are three identified categories of learning; substantive, process and transferable, however, learning could just be one part of any number of hidden or sidelined agendas (Hibbert and Huxham, 2005). It is also likely to exist in conjunction with the other overlapping themes that are identified in collaborations. Learning therefore is likely to be more complex in reality than the three categories lay out, and at times, difficult to distinguish such characteristic differences. Learning processes are intertwined, emerging and imperfect; they cut across all the themes of collaborative advantage. According to Hibbert and Huxham (2005) the potential of local learning must have two qualities: The first is it must be flexible and simple to apply in the incomplete forms in which collaborations are initiated. Secondly it must be suitably applicable and useful to be used in a particular and perpetually complex circumstances of collaboration. It is therefore

consistent with other themes in the theory of collaborative advantage whereby providing specific guidance for collaborators is regarded as an ‘infeasibility’.

Strong networks of trust, communication and personal interaction have been found to have a positive influence on organisational learning processes however a potential paradox exists within the collaborative setting as groups who are too comfortable together may fail to question shared assumptions, views or ideas (Rashman, Withers and Hartley, 2009). It is suggested that to overcome some of the barriers in local process learning is to encourage more social engagement and to reduce the requirement of active management so although structure may be in place to ensure desired learning outcomes of a collaboration are achieved it can, paradoxically, erect more barriers to the collective learning process (Hibbert *et al.*, 2010). The requirement then will be to research how to balance such tensions to give learning processes their full potential. This leads the researcher to look at the wider understanding of organisational learning in this context and the learning possibilities that exist within such collaborations.

## *2.4 Organisational Learning*

### 2.4.1 Background

The almost infamous words of Argyris and Schön (1978) are ones that seem apt for this review of organisational learning theory literature, setting the scene for the challenge faced by researchers of the subject:

> There is something paradoxical here. Organisations are not merely collections of individuals, yet there are no organisations without such collections. Similarly, organisational learning is not merely individual learning, but organisations learn only through the experience and actions of individuals. What, then, are we to make of organisational learning? What is an organisation that it may learn? (Argyris and Schön, 1978, p. 9).

Organisational learning in this research is analysed against a backdrop of the iterative nature of inter-organisational collaborative settings as captured by the theory of collaborative advantage. As put forward by Huxham and Hibbert (2008) the types of learning observed in the research of collaborations are categorised into three groups:

- Experiential Learning: a transferable collaborative process, that is, taking the experiences from one collaborative context and applying them to other circumstances
- Substantive learning: knowledge transfer and creation within the collaboration
- Local collaborative process learning: learning that occurs in the local context and how practitioners develop their understanding of the situations in which they find themselves.

These categorisations of learning have directed the review of the literature. There have been variations in the definition of organisational learning throughout the years, however, at the centre of the majority of definitions, is that organisational learning is a change in the organisation that occurs as the organisation acquires experience (Argote and Miron-Spektor, 2011, p. 1123). This leads on from a similar definition given by Holmqvist (2003, p. 98) who wrote:

> …from these four assumptions of organisational learning that are based in the literature (that learning is experiential, cognitive and behavioural, social, and organized) we may define organisational learning as the social production of organisational rules based on experience that leads to a changed organisational behaviour.

Organisations create environments which the need and possibility for learning capabilities are greater than ever but so too are the challenges of building such capabilities; changing realties

and sustainability demand new ways of thinking and operating (Senge, 2006). Senge (2006, p. xiv) comments further: 'In addition, organisations are becoming more networked, which is weakening traditional management hierarchies and potentially opening up new capacity for continual learning, innovation, and adaptation.'

This discussion is interested in organisational learning from the social perspective, whereby learning is considered inseparable from social interaction and engagement in the workplace (Gherardi, Nicolini and Odella, 1998). Collective knowledge in such environments stimulate organisational change (Brown and Duguid, 2001). Organisational learning has been interpreted as a process of both informal and formal interactions between individuals, which are context-specific and embedded (Araujo, 1998; Gherardi, Nicolini and Odella, 1998; Popper and Lipshitz, 2000; Brown and Duguid, 2001; Tsai, 2002; Lee and Cole, 2003; Rashman, Withers and Hartley, 2009).

### 2.4.2 Holmqvist and the "School of March"

Organisational learning studies have traditionally focused on the single organisations and internal matters, for example in system routines and capabilities, however more recent research has looked to link the processes and relationships of intra and inter organisational learning. This is the case in the work of Holmqvist (2003; 2004; 2009) whose work was heavily influenced by what he terms the 'school of [James] March'.

For Levitt and March (1988) organisational learning is built upon three observations of organisational behavioural studies. The processes of organisational learning focus closer on the organisation as opposed to the individual, that is organisational decision making and change as opposed to individual learning within single organisations. Firstly, behaviours in an organisation are built on routines, favouring an action stemming from a logic of appropriateness over consequentiality. The second is that these actions and routines are based on how the past is interpreted more than anticipations of the future. Thirdly, that organisations are oriented to targets and behaviour is therefore linked to the outcomes observed in relation to the intended outcomes.

Experiential learning mechanisms have been described as: myopic, they do not consider the long-term effects of change; incremental, only the performance effect on the immediately previous change is considered when making change; ignorant, they are based on minimal,

implicit information about the structure of the system or of the performance function. This type of learning can be effective but there is evidence to suggest that learning is reduced when simultaneous learning occurs at multiple levels in an organisational hierarchy (Lounamaa and March, 1987, p. 108). This much like other evidence put forward by March is on the single organisation, albeit single organisations that could have multiple units. It could be presumed then that simultaneous learning of this sort in a collaboration would reduce overall learning effectiveness. Learning can improve organisational performance, but simple forms of learning and adaption require careful application in order to be successful in what are complex situations (Lounamaa and March,1987, p. 121). If organisations collaborating decide not to engage in joint exploration and exploitation, that is they look simply to exploit the exploration of the other, there will end up producing no innovation to imitate and a downward spiral that underinvests in exploration (Levinthal and March,1993, p. 104).

As Holmqvist (2003) points out the research and theory presented by March focuses on the single organisation, although made up of many parts. Holmqvist then makes the leap to focusing on the exploitation and exploration balance when a secondary organisation is introduced. An inter-organisational collaboration is generally not a formal entity and there exists among the members a degree of autonomy which loosens the control of learning processes found more commonly within a single organisation (Holmqvist, 2003). There are inter-level dynamics between intra and inter organisational learning:

> Formal organisations are thus the necessary building blocks of inter-organisational collaborations. The two levels of aggregation are tied together in joint learning cycles and, as in the relation between individuals and organisations, the learning of single organisations is what drives the learning of inter-organisational collaborations (Holmqvist, 2003, p. 103).

The two are therefore linked as the formed collaboration will have its experiential learning influenced by the individual organisations and the relationship is reciprocal if there exists a transfer back into the individual organisation, which can be one of the reasons to choose to collaborate in the first instance.

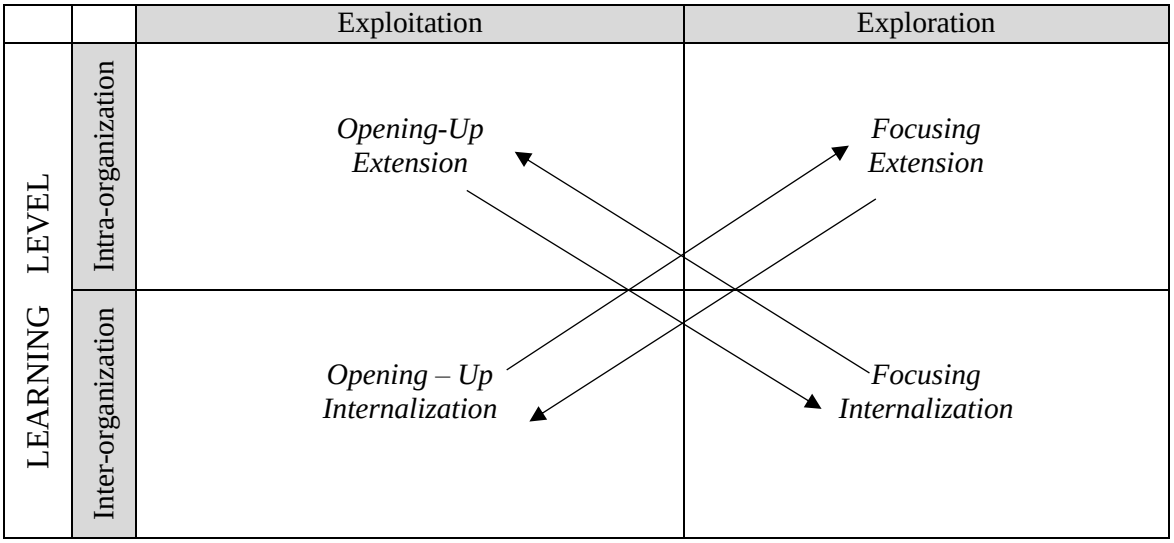


**Figure 2:1 Mode of Learning**
(Adapted from Holmqvist, 2004, p. 73)

Holmqvist (2004, p. 72) describes intra-organisational learning that generates inter-organisational learning as extension, a process whereby one organisation extends its experience to others (Figure 2:1). Learning travelling in the opposite direction is known as internalisation and requires a translating process to turn the collected experience of the collaboration into one that can be exploited by the single organisation. The process of entering exploration has been identified as opening up while turning these new experiences into routines is being identified as focusing. The identified parts of the experiential learning process for Holmqvist (2004) are therefore identified in a framework as; Opening-up, Focusing, Extension and Internalisation. This rationale does though rely on the assumption that any learning, either exploited from another organisation or created together in an exploration process, can in some form be translated back into the singular organisation.
The experiential view of organisational learning sees it as the process through which the past affects the present and the future (Argote, 2011). Argote (2011, p. 440) is confident to assess that learning can manifest itself in changes in beliefs/cognitions or actions/behaviour and that 'most researchers acknowledge this… defining organisational learning as a change in the organisation's knowledge that occurs as a function of experience for example Fiol and Lyles (1985).'

Organisational learning that aims to change conditions is hindered by too much experience, that is, the organisation becomes stale (Holmqvist, 2003). Exploitation of learned practices can be seen when organisations seek to learn what brings success and failure. This refinement of routines however could close off risk taking that is necessary for exploration, innovation

and creation. Learning short term solutions may be hindering longer term benefits. Therefore, a balance is needed between exploitation and exploration and an understanding is required as how one can generate the other (Holmqvist, 2003). Discovering the optimal balance of exploration and exploitation in an organisation is not a trivial exercise as the distribution of resource and return is spread across times and groups within it (March, 1991).

Experiential learning can be identified as the exploitation of knowledge and the exploration of knowledge (Holmqvist, 2003; 2004). Experiential learning within an organisation can be linked to that of the external collaborative organisation. Exploration and exploitation of knowledge are a component of the successful organisation and learning within the singular organisation is what is taken into any external collaboration to be used within the processes of exploitation and exploration in that collaboration. This in turn gives additional knowledge to be shared and explored back in the internal singular organisation (Holmqvist, 2004).

There is a tension between exploration and exploitation that causes challenges. The tendency is to be biased towards exploitation as it has more logic where exploration is more difficult to defend (Crossan and Berdrow, 2003). Exploitation and exploration can happen within an organisation simultaneously, but this coexistence is not the same as balancing the commitment to both processes. The research has shown that the majority of organisations tend to be either dominated by exploration or exploitation. This leads to a competency trap where too much focus is laid on one or the other of these processes (Levitt and March, 1988; Holmqvist, 2009). Holmqvist (2009, p. 278) further argues that if organisational learning becomes more complicated then it slows down the process which will in turn assist in reducing the speed by which self-destructive learning traps of excessive exploitation or excessive exploration are generated; suggesting, that much like the tale of the hare and the tortoise, swift learning is not always the most beneficial. Learning more slowly can prevent against the creation of behavioural and cognitive traps including myopia. By dedicating exploration to interorganisational settings the process of transferring experience to competencies is slowed down through the complexity of the interorganisational setting. As the actors from different organisations will have different past experiences, they will approach any experiential learning outcomes of exploration from different angles. This ambiguity will slow down the establishment of any competency created from the experience (Holmqvist, 2009).

Taking a fine-grained approach to characterizing experience will enable the specificity of when experience has positive or negative effects on organisational processes and outcomes and to become more deliberate in the design of experiential processes that promote organisational learning (Argote, 2011, p. 441). The research by Howard *et al.* (2016) has been done to gain an understanding on how novice firms learn to improve their internal collaboration by learning tacit collaborative routines from more expert partners during a collaborative alliance through social interaction. It also reinforces the idea that routines learned can be transferred to the single organisations internal context, in other words, not simply replicating routines from the more experienced partner: 'Common benefits accrue when what is learned is applied to objectives central to the alliance. Partner firms obtain private benefits when they apply the acquired knowledge to their own operations, apart from the alliance' (Howard *et al.*, 2016, p. 2093).

The quote from Weick (1979, p. 239) '[o]rganisations can and do act like closed systems … Organisational attentiveness to one's own past experience can continue unpunished for surprisingly long periods of time' sets out that organisations can be blinded by their own experience. This could be referred to as "functional stupidity" (Alvesson and Spicer, 2012). It is only through having embedded routines that the need for exploration can be identified and only through the experience of the organisation can useful exploration be identified and brought into exploitation (Holmqvist, 2004). Dissatisfaction is identified as the key mechanism that initiates exploitation or exploration. Dissatisfaction can be identified through external stakeholders such as customers or by internal actors. Dissatisfaction highlights the need for exploration or the need to return to behavioural stability through exploitation (Holmqvist, 2004).

### 2.4.3 Challenges of the Unique Event

One of the current challenges on understanding organisational learning can be found in social developments, such as new organisational forms, but there is opportunity within them too (Argote, 2011, p. 442). It could be viewed that collaborations are unique so there will always be a new organisational form being created, even if the main point of Argote's argument is directed at new types of single organisations. It has been suggested that understanding and managing organisational learning should be done in its unique context, especially as not all learning is inherently or exclusively positive (Crossan and Berdrow, 2003, p. 1103).

> Confidence is likely to become excessive when the experiential record of successes is a poor predictor of future success. Consider, for example, using experiential learning to learn how to avoid or produce an extremely rare event-for example, a major nuclear disaster or a major scientific discovery. Experience rarely generates a rare event. As a result, most people involved in nuclear safety are likely to come to believe they are more capable of producing a safe environment than they actually are (Levinthal and March, 1993, pp. 104-105).

Given that collaborations are unique, either by trying to achieve different goals or by the make up of the stakeholders and active members of the collaboration, there is a question raised about the possibility for organisations to learn to increase effective exploitation of a collaboration to increase the success rate. The other side to this is to consider that collaborations should still be considered valuable activity even if the experience is one of inertia leading to failure. This would cast doubt on the effectiveness of learning in an inter-organisational collaboration as there may be conflicting understanding of what positive learning looks like within the unique setting and given this uniqueness it might reduce the opportunity for experiential learning being transferred to another context. In counter to this the 'synergy model' among other research suggests that learning can be done regardless of this unique nature (Zollo, Reuer and Singh, 2002; Bititci *et al.*, 2007; El Mokadem, 2010). Learning from unique situations has been demonstrated with the application of managed reflection learning in crisis management literature whereby enabling an effective review of action at the point of crisis can create organisational learning, that is, a change in the governing variables to assist in overall organisational change. The managed reflection tool used in the research by Blackman and Ritchie (2008) created a learning process that requires managers to make a major paradigm shift and communicate effectively with the stakeholders involved, thus creating a new outlook for future challenging collaborations.

### 2.4.4 Knowledge Creation and Knowledge Transfer

Research into organisational learning is now more related to that of knowledge management than in earlier studies of both fields (Crossan, Maurer and White, 2011). Argote and Miron-Spektor (2011) focus on knowledge creation, retention and transfer through experience. They write that social networks can affect knowledge creation and it has been indicated that well motivated teams are more innovative when it comes to creativity. Linking to this current study they note that research is also needed in how tools effect knowledge creation.

Knowledge in an organisation is explicit or tacit and presents itself in multiple forms (Argote, 2011). When learning knowledge that is presented in tacit forms it is much more difficult to transfer as it is not something that can simply be purchased (Powell, 1998). This is explained well by Zacharia, Nix and Lusch (2011, p. 592):

> Knowledge itself can be delineated in many ways, but the most common distinction is between explicit knowledge (know what—facts and theories that can be codified) and tacit knowledge (know how—knowledge that can only be observed through application and acquired through practice) (Grant, 1996). Explicit knowledge can be articulated and easy to transfer while tacit knowledge is difficult to articulate and very slow, costly or uncertain to transfer (Kogut and Zander, 1992). Tacit knowledge produces more sustainable advantages, since it is difficult to imitate, and the process of accumulating and leveraging knowledge is more likely to create new sources of advantage (Choo, Linderman and Schroeder, 2007).

According to Holmqvist (2003) much of the literature points to inter-organisational learning allowing for greater knowledge creation as there are fewer organisational controls at play. The lack of formal authority has been described as causing a hindrance to knowledge exploitation unless forced through a critical review of past actions (Holmqvist, 2003, p. 105). So, this might suggest that there is a paradox in that learning is hindered by the instability of inter-organisational collaborations but this in turn allows for creation or exploration to occur more freely.

Knowledge creation is in danger of becoming stale if collaborative partners are not changed with some regularity. The increase in experience will, as in single organisations, run the risk of over exploitation (Holmqvist, 2003). Knowledge retention research focuses on the organisational memory, knowledge depreciation over time and its effect on performance (Argote and Miron-Spektor, 2011), relating to the location of knowledge. For example, if knowledge is embedded in members, member turnover will affect knowledge retention, again this can be linked to the previously discussed themes in collaborative advantage. Learning from other organisational units or from indirect sources is known as knowledge transfer and empirical study has shown that this occurs at the start and during an organisation's lifetime, but the studies also point to variations in the amount of transferring that occurs (Argote, 2011). As organisations become more connected they are able to increase the flow of knowledge from one organisation to another, this is one type of learning, transfer of knowledge. With this increased connectivity comes as second type of learning and that is in

regard to becoming more adept at collaborating with diverse partners (Powell, Koput and Smith-Doerr, 1996, p. 143).

Easterby-Smith, Lyles and Tsang (2008) suggest that there is still much to be learned about the role of both intra- and inter- organisational boundaries in knowledge transfer. Although summarising that the relationship in an inter-organisational setting might be more difficult given the competitive nature, more would need to be understood about how a multi-organisational collaborative project affects relationships and the organisational boundaries. For example, research has been done to gain an understanding on how novice firms learn to improve their internal collaboration by learning tacit collaborative routines from more expert partners during a collaborative alliance through social interaction (Howard *et al.*, 2016). While work has begun in the understanding of inter- and intra- organisational boundaries there is a lack of research in complex multi-agency projects where the boundaries of organisations blur, and as previously discussed learning attitudes will likely have an impact on knowledge acquired (Huxham and Hibbert, 2008). According to Argote (2011), it cannot simply be through a case of an individual member of an organisation learning to say organisational learning has taken place, but rather through that acquired knowledge being absorbed into the organisation. This effectively suggests that there is repository required for knowledge to be stored and accessed regardless of the continued membership of the individual who gained that knowledge. In a collaborative setting the challenge is two-fold as the member could be seen to be either the individual representing the member organisation or the member organisation itself. This can be considered to affect and be affected by the other themes of the theory of collaborative advantage.

## 2.4.5 Other Considerations for Organisational Learning

### 2.4.5.1 The 4I Framework

Crossan, Lane and White (1999) look to focus research on the processes of learning in an organisation, looking beyond the product of knowledge created or shared, to create a framework that aims to explain these processes while linking the individual, group and organisational levels. These processes have been conceptualised as the '4I framework' (Figure 2:2) in a feed-forward, feed-back loop, with four underlying premises: Intuiting (gets an idea) Interpreting (conveys the idea to others) Integrating (puts it into practice) Institutionalising (becomes the norm in the system).

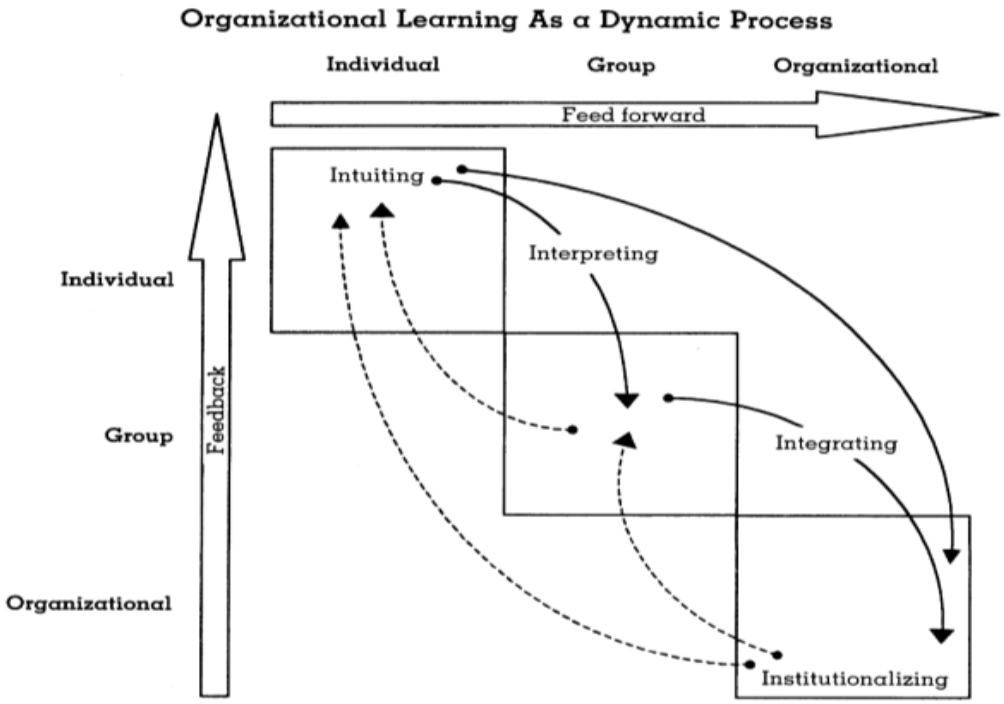


**Figure 2:2 The 4I Framework**
Crossan, Lane and White (1999, p.532)

With regards to this current research regarding learning in the theory of collaborative advantage there are two of these which can be explored. Firstly, Crossan, Maurer and White (2011), say that a tension is created through assimilating new learning (exploration) and using what has been learned (exploitation) and this would be keeping in tensions described elsewhere in collaborative advantage theory. Secondly, learning processes at all levels of the framework - individual, group and organisational - are important in explaining the phenomenon. It is argued that there is little value in looking for a critical level instead the exploration should be in how the levels interact (Crossan, Lane and White, 1999). This

reflective approach to understanding organisational learning would also be in keeping with the nature of a theory of reflective practice describe in collaborative advantage.

#### 2.4.5.2 On the Individual

New organisational forms can make it harder for organisations to interpret experience while at the same time providing opportunities to learn from new sources of experience (Argote, 2011, p. 443). This for collaborations would effectively mean that care would be required not to neglect key learning mechanisms such as social interactions but recognises that engaging with external partners widens the possibility for some form of new knowledge to be created or transferred.

How much the individual can influence organisational learning is in question as studies have shown that the external factors of power and political influence are what shape the learning of the individual within an organisation. The opportunities for real exploration are limited as the individual has in some contexts been shown to learn only what the organisation already knows and is therefore exploitative in nature (Antonacopoulou, 2006). If organisational learning processes are in place, then it is argued that the retention of managers is not critical to ensuring organisational learning. Crossan and Berdrow (2003, p. 1102) show that the consequent change in cognition and behaviours at the individual, group, and organisation levels with the infusion of new managers are evidence of organisational learning. Individual learning is not seen to have a significant impact on organisational learning, predominantly because it is limited within the existing dominant learning structures, which reinforce rather than question the existing status quo (Antonacopoulou, 2006, p. 470).

#### 2.4.5.3 Learning Mechanisms in Collaborations:

Berends and Antonacopoulou (2014) discuss learning in collaborations using synchronisation, although like other mechanisms it is one with barriers to overcome to be effective. Synchronizing is learning across organisational levels from one activity temporally close to the event. For a collaboration, this would therefore be learning across the individual organisations but could be hampered by delays to review meetings or other such learning mechanisms:

> Collaborating organisations, for example, may need ‘synchronized futures’ to coordinate current activities and to create a common ground for interpreting signals from the environment. Working with different time horizons or expectations of the future could be a source of conflict. Synchronizing conceptions of the future might be

> achieved through shared practices such as collaborative scenario planning (Berends and Antonacopoulou, 2014, p. 449).

This in effect means learning about the environment together to ensure there is a shared vision of success. This as shown by the literature of collaborative advantage would raise a number of complex issues and potential difficulty but is further evidence that learning within the collaboration is linked not only to goal setting but a number of the identified themes.

### 2.4.6 Summary

Within this research, it could be argued that the study is not one of organisational knowledge, instead being a research that is concerned with processes of learning in an organisation. For any researcher however, dividing these phenomena is recognised as being quite complex (Easterby-Smith and Lyles, 2011). Authors observing such phenomenon are observing the same phenomena with alternative paradigms (Rashman, Withers and Hartley, 2009; Easterby-Smith and Lyles, 2011). Powell (1998) suggests that organisations are engaged in parallel learning races; one involving learning from collaborations, the other concerns learning how to collaborate, although the two are potentially more intertwined and inter-dependent than parallel. More research is required on the influence of learning systems as they have been found to inhibit the natural development of learning in a social context (Nicolini *et al.*, 2008), while Popper and Lipshitz (2000) found such mechanisms to be a way of capturing collective knowledge for future use (Rashman, Withers and Hartley, 2009).

In an ambiguous world, slow learning may be more effective than fast learning, but balancing them is a common theme. Patience should be supplement with decisiveness, making sharp changes whenever changes are enacted (Lounamaa and March, 1987, p. 121). These challenges mean that putting learning on the agenda of an inter-organisational collaboration might be a hard sell for those involved:

> The imperfections of learning are not bases for abandoning attempts to improve the learning capabilities of organisations, but they suggest a certain conservatism in expectations. Conservative expectations, of course, will not always enhance the selling of learning procedures to strategic managers, but they may provide a constructive basis for a realistic evaluation and elaboration of the role of learning in organisational intelligence. Magic would be nice, but it is not easy to find (Levinthal and March, 1993, p. 110).

Organisational learning is seen as having great value and is believed to create improved performance in organisations and the prosperity of their members. If organisational learning does have such a positive impact on an organisation's success then a greater understanding of it is only likely to co tribute to continued increases in performance and prosperity (Argote, 2011, p. 444). However, learning may not be entirely virtuous and therefore researchers should be mindful of different patterns of organisational learning in a context:

> Focusing on only the perceived positive aspects of organisational learning they will fail to comprehend its full complexity. We conclude that it is necessary to first describe organisational learning and then assess whether the organisational learning process is appropriate for the organisation, given its context (Crossan and Berdrow, 2003, pp. 1103-1104).

There exists the potential of managerial tensions between focusing on knowledge creation and knowledge management against focusing on learning processes that involve putting knowledge into action as some critique one could distract from the other (Rashman, Withers and Hartley, 2009). Some of the identified barriers to learning and knowledge transfer within the inter-organisational context mirror the themes of the theory of collaborative advantage such as belief systems (Fiol and Lyles, 1985), trust (Araujo, 1998), leadership (Reagans and McEvily, 2003). The dynamic nature of inter-organisational contexts adds to changing priorities and agendas and is therefore another potential barrier (Coopey and Burgoyne, 2000). As summarised by Levitt and March (1988, pp. 335-336) learning does not always produce intelligent behaviour. This is due to human cognitive behaviour, features of the organisation and the characteristics of experience. These lead to superstitious learning, competency traps and erroneous inferences. The other side to this pessimism is that lessons from experience exist in routines and evidence shows that they are an important basis of organisational intelligence and organisations can learn in face of the challenges presented. The positives of learning should be compared to the alternatives, and not with perfection.

This research is concerned with performance measurement and management facilitating organisational learning. It could be there is an experiential learning loop of learning improving performance and vice versa. Having looked at organisational learning and the ways in which this has been researched so far within the theory of collaborative advantage the attention turns to using performance measurement and management as a mechanism for impacting organisational learning.

## 2.5 Performance Measurement and Management

According to Micheli and Mari (2013), there is evidence which shows that organisations are moving away from potentially restrictive viewpoints of 'what gets measured gets done' (Kaplan and Norton, 1992) and 'if it cannot be measured it cannot be managed' (Garvin, 1993), to focus on 'true descriptions' of performance through performance measurement systems (Micheli and Manzoni, 2010). Performance management of these systems is defined as:

> …the use of performance measurement information to effect positive change in organisational culture, systems and processes, by helping to set agreed-upon performance goals, allocating and prioritising resources, informing managers to either confirm or change current policy or programme directions to meet those goals, and sharing results of performance in pursuing those goals (Amaratunga and Baldry, 2002, p. 218).

An analysis of the literature review carried out by Franco-Santos, Lucianetti and Bourne (2012) shows it can be argued that contemporary performance management systems have been found to influence performance at all levels of an organisation. According to Melnyk *et al.* (2014) performance measurement and management systems affect and are affected by; organisational culture, corporate strategy and the environmental context of the organisation. Similarly, the consequences of contemporary performance measurement systems have been categorised parsimoniously by Franco-Santos, Lucianetti and Bourne (2012) as falling into the categories of people's behaviour, organisational capabilities and performance consequences.

Franco-Santos *et al.* (2007) have suggested five categories for the use of PM systems; measuring performance, strategy management, communication, influence behaviour and learning improvement. The roles the systems play are critical, including, most relevantly for this research, the role of facilitating learning (Melnyk *et al.*, 2014). The notion of performance, both as management and measurement, is commonplace throughout industry, in both private and non-profit sectors and through contemporary societies in general, although there is limited agreement to the effectiveness, benefits and failings of introducing performance measurement systems (Bititci *et al.*, 2012; Micheli and Mari, 2013). Questions of who, what, how and when remain prevalent within the field. There exists an ambivalent picture in the literature regarding the suitability for employing performance measurement as

an efficiency driver and there is a line of thought that they perhaps are most effective when applied to purposes of strategic planning (Greiling, 2006; Micheli and Manzoni, 2010). Within the third-sector, conclusions about whether performance measurement has a positive effect on increased efficiency and effectiveness are mixed, and there is currently only minimal evidence in the literature to support this underlying assumption about a positive relationship (Moxham, 2014, p. 709). Some of the recent literature surrounding theories and effects of performance measurement and management distinguish between for profit and not-for-profit sectors (Franco-Santos, Lucianetti and Bourne, 2012; Moxham, 2014). However, Speklé and Verbeeten (2014), among others (e.g. Bititci *et al.*, 2012; Mannion and Braithwaite, 2012; Smith and Bititci, 2017), are part of a growing belief that taking a wider view of operation management reduces the barriers for implementing useful and meaningful systems of measurement, regardless of sector.

When creating a system there is a danger that only that which can be easily accessed is deemed important to measure. This raises questions over the ontological and epistemological validity of what is being measured if some areas of reality are ignored or not explored due to its complexity, tacit or hidden nature (Micheli and Mari, 2013). Complete objectivity should not be considered as a necessary condition to measurement given the social objects which measurement relates to, as well as the physical and ideal (Micheli and Mari, 2013). Arguably, performance measurement and management is a social phenomenon, as its behaviour is shaped by the feelings, values and basic beliefs of the individuals, organisation, community and the society within which it operates (Bititci *et al.*, 2012, pp. 310-311).

### 2.5.1 Organisational Control

Emerging from bodies of literature that have been described as related and parallel, organisational control and performance measurement and management attempt to grasp the complexity of organisational systems (Smith and Bititci, 2017, p. 1208). There is a clear link in the relationship between performance measurement and organisational behaviour in the performance-measurement literature (Bourne *et al.*, 2002; Franco and Bourne, 2003; Nudurupati and Bititci, 2005; Bititci *et al.*, 2006; Bititci *et al.*, 2012).

Organisational control theory is about how influence can be exerted by an organisation so thus enabling it to achieve its objectives (Eisenhardt, 1985; Cardinal, Sitkin and Long, 2004; Liu, Borman and Gao, 2014; Smith and Bititci, 2017). It has been found that performance

measurement systems can be more suitably applied through a theoretical understanding and development of the process characteristics involved in organisational control (Smith and Bititci, 2017). Performance is influenced by two types of organisational control mechanisms; these are commonly referred to as '*technical control'* and '*social controls'* (Child, 1973). Organisational control according to Ouchi (1979, p. 833) seeks a solution to 'the problem of obtaining cooperation among a collective of individuals or units who only share partially congruent objectives.' While this issue was raised in relation to the single organisation it can just as easily be applied to collaborations in which goal congruence increases in its complexity. It is put forward that the answer to achieving cooperation among members lies in discovering a balance between socialisation and measurement control mechanisms (Ouchi, 1979, p. 846). This suggests that the correct balance, which would be subject to the variables of the organisation type, would create an optimal process to maximise performance.

In a similar understanding of organisational control, Simons (1994, p. 171) states: 'the purpose of making a control system interactive is to focus attention and force dialogue and learning throughout the organisation.' The four levers of control system proposed by Simons (1994) divides the 'social' element into belief and interactive control system and the 'technical' element into diagnostic and boundary systems. Belief systems are mission statements and values while interactive systems are concerned with managerial decision making about strategy and employee engagement. The diagnostic systems are concerned with goal setting and attainment, analysing outputs, and boundary systems are 'formal rules' which 'allow individual creativity within defined limits of freedom.'

Cardinal, Sitkin and Long (2004) claim to have made organisational control theory dynamic. They understand that to reach an optimum control system an organisation has to go through multiple phases which look to redress imbalances, but which in turn create new imbalances. This may lead to a perpetual rebalancing and evolution of controls. It is suggested one of the ways a PM and management system can be implemented successfully is to build dynamism in the system. The dynamic organisational structure will have a need for boundary controls within a parsimonious system (Micheli and Manzoni, 2010, p. 471). The idea of a dynamic control system has also been seen in Speckbacher (2003) who describe three phases and levels of control maturity. Concerning collaborations, the challenge would be being able to either survive the length of time required to reach maturity or an ability to fast-track through the phases, given the often temporary and instable nature of such partnerships.

Flexibility of control leads to a flexibility of measurement types, which among other things is good for learning (Henri, 2006). Knowledge management (creation, transfer and interpretation) is among the critical features belonging to organisational controls. The control mechanisms that exist affect the capture of knowledge and its interpretation and dissemination and consequently how it is used to achieve organisational targets (Turner and Makhija, 2006). The control system also includes *feedback* and *feedforward* controls concerned with goal attainment and goal setting respectively (Bititci, 2015). It is unclear however if those managing or participating in the collaboration will have much ability to change the purpose, the meta-goal of the collaboration, if it has been imposed top-down. It is suggested that in short-term projects which have a more defined outcome target and defined life-span, those given responsibility for managing them have little or no impact on strategic development (Haniff and Fernie, 2008).

The conceptual control framework of Tessier and Otley (2012) is an example of evolving the understanding of organisational controls beyond the understanding that controls can either be positive or negative, as is Simons' levers of control framework (Simons, 1994). Tessier and Otley (2012) recognise that there are multiple uses of control; firstly control types are either social, technical or both; secondly, they can be used to ether control performance or compliance; and thirdly, they can be further designed to allow for things such as a feedforward/feedback loop, enabling/constraining actions or used to control incentives. They put social and technical controls into the centre of the control framework and argue that controls are not good or bad but vary in quality depending on achieving the desired, or alternatively unwanted, consequences. For example, although controls may be deliberately designed to be coercive and restrictive, if they achieve their intended purpose then they are of high quality. Tessier and Otley (2012) further suggest that not all control modes illicit a positive or negative response form subordinates or employees, instead they can show a neutral response to them. Tessier and Otley (2012) describe the belief system, that which sets out organisational values and principals, as a type of social boundary control, but not a control system in itself. Instead it acts alongside technical controls to create a control system. Boundary control systems from this view can be both social and technical in control type. 'Building on Simons' work on control systems performance indicators can be used to set 'boundary systems' designed to restrain employee behaviour and define limits of freedom within the organisational context' (Micheli and Manzoni, 2010, p. 470). It could therefore be interpreted that boundary systems are closer to social controls in nature, but control types

cannot be boxed in. Rather they can have different purposes depending on the chosen control system. Much like Cardinal, Sitkin and Long (2004) and Liu, Borman and Gao (2014) these control systems are seen as being able to complement one another and not used in isolation.

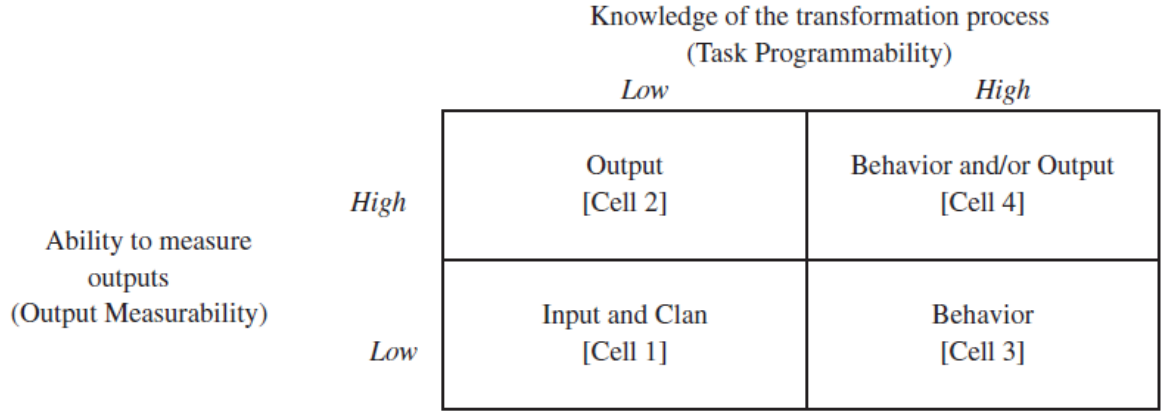


**Figure 2:3 Choice Control Mode**
(Liu et al, 2014, p793)

Control modes in organisational control theory literature are also known as output, behaviour, clan and input controls (Ouchi, 1979; Eisenhardt, 1985; Liu, Borman and Gao, 2014). Where Ouchi (1979) and Eisenhardt (1985) discuss and analyse the use of only one type of control mode, Liu, Borman and Gao (2014, p. 792) highlight the evidence in the literature that shows different control modes being simultaneously used with a positive impact on performance (Henderson and Lee, 1992; Kirsch, 1996; Cardinal, 2001; Cardinal, Sitkin and Long, 2004). There is also evidence of simultaneous deployment of multiple control modes where there is a need to achieve multifaceted goals (Turner and Makhija, 2006). Ouchi's (1979) adapted control theory framework (Figure 2:3) is unable to demonstrate the complexity of the factors that make up the choice of control modes.

Not entirely in line with, but similar to, the aforementioned 'social controls' is the idea of 'Input and Clan' control. As stated by Liu, Borman and Gao (2014, p. 793): 'Clan control typically requires joint problem solving, participatory decision making, open and honest information sharing, and keeping promises.' Input mode describes the allocation of resource including staff selection and other formal and bureaucratic processes. Output and behaviour control lend themselves more to the notion of 'technical' controls were goal attainment is monitored and behaviour is controlled through targets and accountability. There are however overlaps in these views and definitions of organisational control, which are not readily interchangeable, for example clan control concerns goal setting which is described elsewhere as a 'technical' control. The idea of having a dynamic control system (Cardinal, Sitkin and

Long, 2004) is strengthened by Liu, Borman and Gao (2014) who put forward that managing the balance of control modes by understanding the interactions that exist between them is one way to determine performance and thus present a question of balance and managing the tensions therein.

More recently, Smith and Bititci's (2017) 'dimensions of organisational control' framework (Figure 2:4) was influenced from the fields of performance measurement and organisational studies. The framework reflects, from an organisational control theory lens stance, that social and technical controls co-exist and require simultaneous consideration (Cardinal, Sitkin and Long, 2004; Bititci *et al.*, 2012; Tessier and Otley, 2012; Smith and Bititci, 2017). The framework has conceptualised the understanding of the interplay between the technical controls (performance measurement) and social controls (performance management) which furthers the studies that have suggested organisational control modes should go beyond a single control mode and focus on how modes might be successfully combined. In this way Smith and Bititci (2017) seem to support the preceding discussion above in which Liu, Borman and Gao (2014) adopt a balance of control modes view, warning against the application of single control modes.

Smith and Bititci (2017, p. 1210) describe technical controls as the processes which are involved in setting targets and subsequent use of performance data; collection, analysis, reporting, interpretation and assessment. Social controls are concerned with monitoring and developing cultural aspects of the organisation, for example communication and behaviour. Ates *et al.* (2013) say a focus on better internal communication would assist smaller organisations to get away from a command and control management style to one which supports more participatory behaviours. Whatever the style, there is a recognised importance in the need to pay attention to the social elements of operations management to complement the purely structural elements (Rotch, 1993; Tessier and Otley, 2012; Smith and Bititci, 2017).

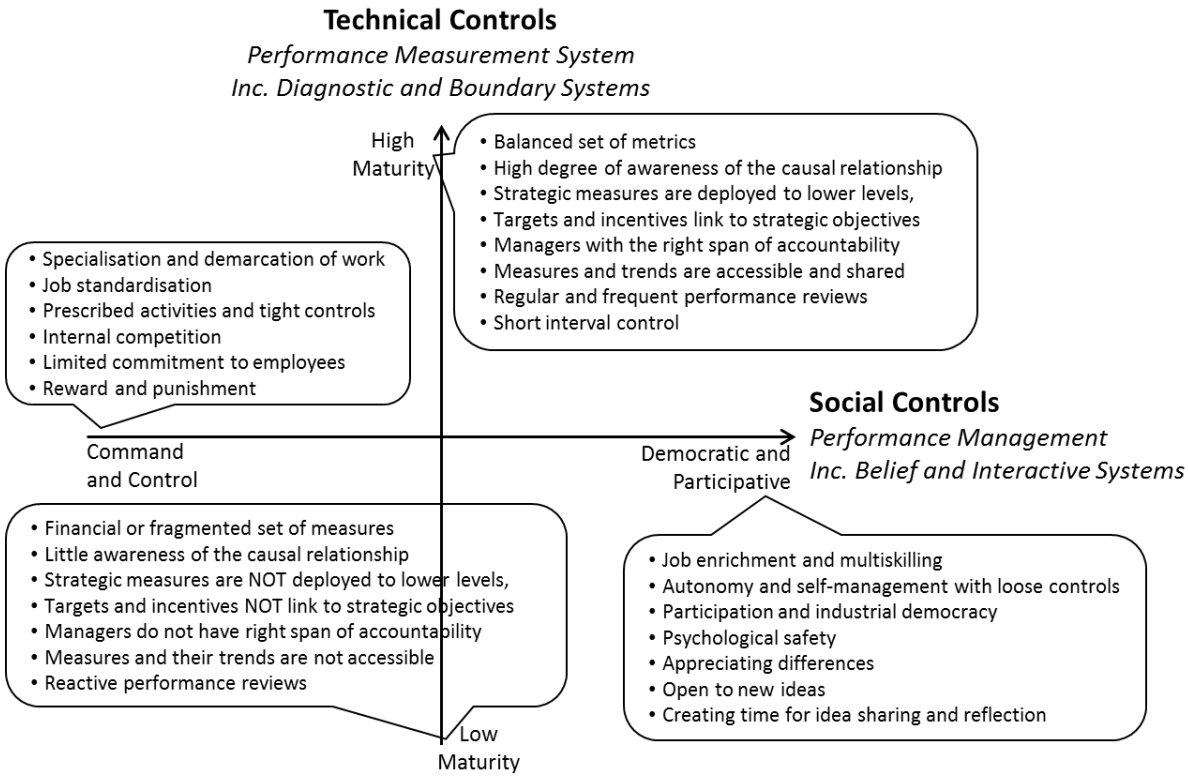


**Figure 2:4 Dimensions of Organisational Control**
*(Smith and Bititci, 2017)*

### 2.5.1.1 Use of Performance Measurement and Management

The balanced scorecard (Kaplan, 2001) places the organisation's vision and strategy at the centre and link these to four key perspectives; financial, internal, customer, and learning and growth. Each are managed through objectives, measures, targets and initiatives. Learning and growth as a perspective simply asks how learning and improvement can be a continual process:

> Organisational learning and growth arise from such sources as people and systems. Typical measures for the learning and growth perspective include employee motivation, retention, capabilities, and alignment, as well as information system capabilities (Kaplan, 2001, p. 357).

It is suggested by Melnyk *et al.* (2014) that performance measurement and management (PMM) should align with strategy. This though raises the question, in regard to collaborations, does a strategy exist and if not, what effect might this have on the PMM system? Research is focusing on how PMM keeps abreast of the changes in strategy (Melnyk *et al.*, 2014) which is relevant as the dynamic nature of collaborations would suggest that the strategy would be fluid and iterative in nature. This is alluded to by Melnyk *et al.* (2014) who recognise the work done on the relationship between strategy and the changes in environment

while highlighting the gap in understanding if and how PMM systems directly react to constant changes in the environment. The relationship between environment, strategy and PMM is not linear but one that overlaps with one another and can therefore conclude that PMM has a key role in directing a business. What Melnyk *et al.* (2014) have shown through their 'Performance Alignment Matrix' (Figure 2:5) is the link between strategy and PMM cannot be simplified and there are a number of factors at play which require a more contingent response. Desired outcomes, strategic goals, aims, objectives, or however the collaboration may wish to label such outputs, are shown to be caught up in a number of other factors that require management. The turbulent environment of a collaboration would suggest that creating a PMM system for it directly from strategy would be potentially flawed. How individuals and their organisations see the purpose of the collaboration and its usefulness will likely determine where they envisage the most suitable area of the matrix (Figure 2:5) in which to place the project. For example, if innovation is best suited to assessment-driven management then it follows that those who are driven by knowledge creation or transfer are more likely to wish for this type of system. Ultimately however, the existence of any other goal type, explicit or otherwise, is likely to cause tension and pull the project towards another of the four quadrants.

| | | **Outcome** | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | General | Specific |
| **Solutions** | General | Assessment-driven management | Outcome-driven solutions |
| | Specific | Solution-driven outcomes | Measurement-driven management |

**Figure 2:5 The Performance Alignment Matrix**
*(Melnyk et al., 2014)*

### 2.5.1.2 Other Theoretical Approaches to PMM

As there is no agreed single theoretical underpinning, some scholars have taken a meta-theory approach to performance measurement and management or chose not to explicitly state a theoretical lens (see Franco-Santos, Lucianetti and Bourne, 2012).

A contingent theoretical approach can be useful as some findings are context dependent (Franco-Santos, Lucianetti and Bourne, 2012). This view is relevant to this research which is aware of both the inter-organisational and non-profit nature of the studied context. Contingency theory might suggest that one of the challenges of designing a PM system is that

each system will have some unique characteristic and that a system is not universally applicable (Franco-Santos, Lucianetti and Bourne, 2012). This type of approach explains the challenges that exist in individual strategic business units, where performance measurement systems are required to be adapted for different objectives and measurement requirements (Richard *et al*., 2009). For example, organisational culture has a bearing on the design and use of control systems in organisations (Henri, 2006) and is one of the contingent factors highlighted in the literature that deals with the design and implementation of performance control. Those taking a more flexible approach tend to use the PM system as a way of supporting strategic decision making. While there are thought to be many contingent factors at play affecting the use of performance measurement Henri (2006) shows that the PM system itself is a contingent factor, given that the nature and intensity of use of a PM system can vary.

Organisational effectiveness cannot be summed up in a parsimonious performance statement or the ability of a system to transform resource (Connolly, Conlon and Deutsch, 1980; Mohr, 2006). A constituency theory approach addresses this by using multiple assessments of performance through the application of a variety of 'constituencies' (Connolly, Conlon, & Deutsch, 1980). Extending this to inter-organisational ventures, it is thought that these can be 'can be assessed by multiple partner firms on multiple criteria' (Mohr, 2006, p. 249). This view goes beyond the already complex idea that performance is treated as multi-dimensional. What can be taken from the multiple constituency approach is that performance indicators used by an organisation's 'constituencies' vary, for example, success for a not-for-profit organisation (NPO) is to be measured how effectively and efficiently it meets the needs of their constituencies (Kaplan, 2001, p. 353). From this perspective success is likely to mean different things to different stakeholders. The stakeholder theory perspective is used by Conaty (2012) to highlight the challenges faced in creating a performance management system in NPOs as they, by nature, do have a high complexity of stakeholder relationships, especially in the public sector. Other difficulties include the role of power, identity, clashes of organisational and social culture, and tensions in priority objectives. It should be of no surprise that these issues mirror the management themes of the theory of collaborative advantage (Section 2.3). Herman and Renz (2008) support the notion that organisational effectiveness is a social construction and as such there should be more than once indicator of success or effectiveness in the NPO, while the effectiveness of the NPO will likely rely on the effectiveness of those within its collaborative networks.

### 2.5.2 Inter-organisational

Drawing attention towards the effect on inter-organisational relationships that performance measurement [PM] systems have, as required by this study, there is evidence pointing to the benefits of such systems. It is suggested by research that organisational capabilities are influenced by PM systems, but, not well understood in the current literature, is the effect on inter-firm performance and there is a requirement for further research in this area in different contexts (Franco-Santos, Lucianetti and Bourne, 2012; Melnyk *et al.*, 2014). Performance frameworks in the literature tend to only concern themselves with the single organisation, as opposed to a network which may not share the same structures and, or, processes (Bititci *et al.*, 2012).

Benefits performance measurement and management [PMM] has on organisational capabilities include enhancing supply relationships through increased cooperation and socialisation (Mahama, 2006). Socialisation is also improved through increased communication facilitated by a PM system in the supply chain relationship (Cousins, Lawson and Squire, 2008). This extends the findings that PM systems allow for information to be shared among the cooperating organisations in the supply chain and consequently allows for organisational learning in a more equitable environment (Mahama, 2006). Folan and Browne comment:

> inter-organisational performance measurement may be divided into supply chain and extended enterprise performance measurement: the former relying solely on traditional logistics measures, while the latter incorporates the structural aspects of the supply chain system and adds non-logistics perspectives to its measurement arena (Folan and Browne, 2005, p. 633).

While the context of research is different, the complexity of designing a PMM system should not be underestimated and the complexity increases when it becomes inter-organisational and may further impact the organisation's current intra-organisational system.

Trends in organisational behaviour are moving on from the perspective of managers controlling those under their supervision, especially within an inter-organisational setting that generally does not have a hierarchical structure, whereby neither organisation holds authority of the other (Liu, Borman and Gao, 2014). Translating pre-existing technical and, or, social controls from one of the collaborating organisations will inevitably cause conflict and, or, tensions as any form of collaborative project will likely involve stakeholders with varying

expectations and definitions of success. The collaborative setting further complicates the decision making process with regards to which metrics are employed to measure any potential outputs (Davis, 2014).

Some of the identified challenges in creating a collaborative PM system are similar to more traditional systems such as the quality and accuracy of data gathered and how that is managed (Papakiriakopoulos and Pramatari, 2010). When separate organisations are collaborating, they are in essence creating an additional virtual organisation that also requires measurement. This leads to greater complexity as each participating organisation may have their own requirements as to how any PM system would operate and the relationship, if any, it should have with the participating organisations individual PM and management system (Bititci *et al.*, 2012). In order for a successful collaborative performance management system to be implemented there are barriers to overcome, including the need for a collaborative culture and the identification of appropriate performance measures (Busi and Bititci, 2006, p. 15). If done successfully however, it has been observed that a PMM system is a powerful tool to enable cultural change and to enable a more democratic leadership style (Bititci *et al.*, 2006; Franco-Santos, Lucianetti and Bourne, 2012). Some of the possible dangers or difficulties when creating or agreeing upon a PMM system when establishing a working collaboration include being able to trust a system, especially if it is brought in from a participating organisation and is alien to one or more of the others. If the indicators have not been correctly established or agreed, then it runs the risk of producing data that is inappropriate. It is suggested that if performance measures are considered an investment of resource more care may be taken over its implementation and not just put forward as something that is inherently positive or a necessary evil (Micheli and Mari, 2013). Although tackling a single case study, Bititci *et al.* (2005) show that it is possible to build a PMM system that connects an organisation to its various extended strategic business units or extended enterprises, allowing it to connect to existing measurements and create and interdependency. While possible, the process was complex and not without need for investment of resource. Performance should be managed by each collaborating unit, but this should be co-ordinated with all the units to ensure an overarching meta process (Bititci *et al.*, 2003). Through investment in measuring tools, such as an ICT system, collaborative performance measures enable pro-active management decision making in a collaborative enterprise (Sena Ferreira *et al.*, 2012).

### 2.5.3 Goal Setting and Goal Commitment

Goals with greater clarity elicit an increase in performance (Locke and Latham, 1990). This means that goal specificity reduces any ambiguity that might exist in organisational purpose (Franco-Santos, Lucianetti and Bourne, 2012). This may also be linked to an increase in goal commitment behaviours which likewise have been shown to improve general performance (Webb, 2004; Lau and Sholihin, 2005; Burney and Widener, 2007; Franco-Santos, Lucianetti and Bourne, 2012). These arguments surrounding goal setting theory tend to refer to goals on the individual level, and not those of the organisational level (Franco-Santos, Lucianetti and Bourne, 2012). It is unclear, therefore, how this relates to a collaboration, where, as previously discussed, there is a third level of collaborative goals.

PMM can aid 'motivation of employees at all levels, promotion of a performance improvement culture, and fostering of organisational learning' (Micheli and Manzoni, 2010, p. 466). Performance management concerns itself in the clarification of organisational goals which then works to set targets and expectations of individual performance (Busi and Bititci, 2006), while performance measurement systems impact the motivation of employees in their commitment to achieve whatever goals that have been set. Among the potential benefits of this is the satisfaction that can potentially be gained from meeting or exceeding goal targets (Webb, 2004). It is suggested that the participants should be involved in creating the PM system as there is a relationship between their participation and goal commitment and that a PM system should perhaps look to facilitate the perception that participants, or employees, have over their ability to positively impact job outcomes through self-determination and a level of autonomy (Webb, 2004; Hall, 2008; Franco-Santos, Lucianetti and Bourne, 2012). A nurturing environment where all values and opinions are listened to is a good way for engaging and motivating individuals in an NPO, however, Kaplan (2001) warns that trying to cover and include the wants and needs of everyone leads to organisational ineffectiveness. According to Kaplan (2001), performance measurement should focus on what output and outcomes the organisation intends to achieve, having clear goals are a pre-requisite for formal control mechanisms, something that allows outputs to be measured and evaluated (Das and Teng, 1998). Extending this to inter-organisational collaborations however will be met by the challenges of agreement on such outputs and outcomes. These are likely to be numerous and not necessarily congruent or compatible (Vangen and Huxham, 2011). Learning in the balanced scorecard requires a clear vision, and collaborative projects are renowned for goal complexity and being iterative in nature.

Franco-Santos, Lucianetti and Bourne (2012) relate goal setting theory to equity theory. It is argued through equity theory (Adams, 1965) that if an individual perceives an injustice in rewards, they will seek retribution through leaving an organisation or by becoming a saboteur. Regarding collaborations, this might be related to rewards for each stakeholder, so if a performance system highlights that there are fewer rewards for some than other participants, it will lead to dissatisfaction. This may explain some of the reluctance to engage in a PM system that would bring potential inequalities to the fore, or perhaps just a general reluctance to be judged against a set of indicators that are different to the individual organisation. As equity theory is also linked to trust building theories in organisational literature it is of interest to note that, in the theory of collaborative advantage, the trust building loop is said to be built on achieving small wins, or micro-goals (Huxham and Vangen, 2005); a picture begins to emerge on how PMM is intertwined with the extant themes of collaborative advantage theory.

Goal setting is therefore a possibly useful control mechanism in strategic alliances; making room for participation among the actors develops shared norms and values, allowing for an incremental growth of trust and agreement. Indeed, the central element of social control is organisational culture. Thus, goal setting is key for both formal and social controls (Das and Teng, 1998). Managing organisation controls can impact on achieving goals which in turn can be part of the trust building loop, that is, gaining small wins. In a collaborative setting, agreeing to performance indicators can assist in the operation of achieving each goal and give an insight to individual commitment levels (Bryson, Ackermann and Eden, 2016). However Bryson, Ackermann and Eden (2016) also show a reluctance to engage in performance measures for aspects that participants did not have full control over or had a reliance on the input of others, the preference was some sort of tracking measurement for these. Visual goal mapping is offered as one solution to achieve such measurement in these collaborative situations (Bryson, Ackermann and Eden, 2016).

From an organisational control lens stance, it is suggested by Liu, Borman, and Gao (2014, p. 801) ‘that a combination of input, output and clan control can be effective in a client–contractor setting. If used though behaviour control should be avoided.’ Of these, clan control is the most suited to a partnership that has clear mutual needs and shared values, enabling the development of a close and successful working relationship. Such controls promote democracy in decision making and allows for open and flexible communication and

reporting. Therefore, relating to the social/technical view of organisational control, if input combined with output and clan controls have shown to be key to successfully achieving expected project outcomes, it might be argued that complex projects lend themselves to 'looser' social controls as behaviour controls are deliberately avoided where possible. Under this view then 'technical controls' would only concern itself with setting and achieving goals and have a reduced need to create detailed accountability.

Looking at a not -for profit context, Speklé and Verbeeten (2014) suggest that performance systems work most effectively when goals are clear and unambiguous, which allows for incentive and accountability-based management, however it could have a negative effect on organisational performance where there are multiple other considerations. One of the characteristics that is shared among the multiple themes of the theory of collaborative advantage is the need that they are constantly nurtured by whichever person(s) deemed responsible for doing so. This need is echoed by de Waal, Goedegebuure and Geradts (2011) who similarly conclude that implementing a successful long-term performance measurement plan requires continuous attention (Moxham, 2014 p. 720). Knowing what to measure in the third sector is a challenge, as is identifying useful and reliable measurements. In government supply contracts it is believed to be more straightforward to apply measurements to contractors in the for-profit sector, while pinpointing the fixed goal attainment for the third sector lacks rational (Amirkhanyan, 2008; 2010). Amirkkhanyan's studies, however well researched, are focused only on formal contracts with a dyadic relationship. Nonetheless, it is noted that learning from the contractor should be part of the relationship that they develop (Amirkhanyan, 2008).

Goal setting does is argued as one way to begin to create a collaborative performance measurement system by firstly identifying the shared commonality in the collaboration, that is the common objective of the collaboration (Papakiriakopoulos and Pramatari, 2010). Papakiriakopoulos and Pramatari (2010) go on to say that if collaborating partners can identify their shared commonality in the collaboration they can begin to measure and understand its success. This, other than raising questions about identifying the common objective, also would lead to questions around measuring and understanding success when there is no common objective, multiple common objectives or multiple objectives, some of which may be hidden, either deliberately or through assumption of overtness. Having ambiguous and uncertain goals are often part of the drive to enter into a form of partnership

alliance, and reducing the control can be beneficial to accommodate hidden agendas (Das and Teng, 1998). There is further complexity to be found in the application of any agreed collaborative measurement system. Early findings of current research in complex multi stakeholder organisations show that such measurement systems create ambiguity as stakeholders interpret their meaning differently (Ojiako *et al*., nd). For performance systems to be effective they must fit the organisational environment as, paradoxically, misapplied performance measures have been shown to hinder performance (Melnyk *et al.*, 2014). Moxham's (2014) study of performance measurement in the third sector found evidence which shows that performance measurements are in some cases, much as in the private sector, misapplied. For example, organisations using something overly complex and laborious like a balanced scorecard simply for accountability or using lagging measurements when something more responsive to service user needs would be more beneficial.

### 2.5.4 Facilitating Organisational Learning

Performance measurement systems that focus the attention on action and improvement over reporting and control mechanisms better support the facilitation of organisational learning, however, it is how it impacts organisational learning capabilities that is said to remain unclear (Franco-Santos, Lucianetti and Bourne, 2012).

The descriptive themes that unravel the phenomenon of collaborative working found in the aforementioned and discussed theory of collaborative advantage can assist in the requirement to firstly understand what is occurring in the virtual organisation during the lifespan of the collaboration. Through understanding more about this additional degree of complexity associated with collaborative organisations it may be possible to begin to answer how the performance of the collaborative organisation can be concurrently managed, while also managing the performance of the participating organisations as a complete system (Bititci *et al.*, 2012, p. 313). Reflecting on this, it has been proposed in the literature that the ultimate goal of performance measurement should be learning rather than control (Davenport, Harris and Morison, 2010). There is evidence in the performance measurement and management literature that types of learning can be facilitated. Performance systems should detect and correct discrepancies in desired outcomes (Melnyk *et al.*, 2014) and facilitate both single and double loop learning (Argyris and Schön, 1978). Single-loop learning occurs when errors are corrected without altering the underlying governing values while double-loop learning occurs when errors are corrected by changing the governing values and then the actions, helping

leaders alter their frame, their paradigm and spontaneous understanding of a particular situation (Argyris, 2002; Witherspoon, 2013). PMM systems have been shown to facilitate both modes of this type of learning (Melnyk *et al.*, 2014). Those using controls only for monitoring tend to engage in single loop learning while those with more flexibility are more likely to seek out double loop learning, that is, a more complex learning which seeks the cause for any sub-optimal performance outputs (Henri, 2006). Learning is also a considered to be an important concept in the balanced scorecard approach (Kaplan and Norton, 1992) and using analytics from performance measures, whether about processes or employees, to create and share knowledge is one way to be and remain competitive (Davenport, 2006; 2010); whether this translates suitably to third sector or to NPOs in general is in question (Moxham, 2014), especially given the required investment of resource. The scarcity of resource to invest in the collection and analysis of such data proves to be one of the stumbling blocks of implementation in the third sector. However, where outcomes have been measured, they have been used as feedback to decision makers and then implemented as a learning and improvement tool (Buckmaster, 1999; Lynch-Cerullo and Cooney, 2011; Moxham, 2014).

Structures of organisational controls directly affects knowledge management behaviours. Clan controls are useful when creating new knowledge through the collective and diverse knowledge of multiple agents with the transfer of knowledge in an internal setting, promoting transfer thorough socialisation and experience (Turner and Makhija, 2006). Flexibility values of control can aid the opening-up process of communication between agents throughout the organisation. Through this there is a transfer of knowledge, exchanges of ideas and opinions, which lends itself both to better knowledge management and organisational learning opportunities and ultimately strategic decision making (Henri, 2006, p. 84).

In general, therefore, it is shown that a PM system influences organisational capabilities and these consequences include various forms of organisational learning (Franco-Santos, Lucianetti and Bourne, 2012), which can be utilised in the pursuit of competitive advantage. Should the focus be solely on empirical objects and quantitative data, there is a question of the value of measurement systems that ignores the more subjective qualitative data available (Micheli and Mari, 2013). If there is a lack of adequate tools to measure the tacit outputs of collaborations, which include organisational learning, the potential value, or capital, created may be lost. Indeed, according to Franco-Santos *et al*. (2007, p. 797) ‘although it is possible

to design, maintain and use a performance measurement system without organisational learning occurring, such an outcome is extremely unlikely.'

### 2.5.5 Further Challenges

There are reasons why a PM system may not be developed, which revolve around use of resource, both time and money. Implementing a PM system is costly, both in monitoring and in front line resource of data collection, analysis and dissemination of that information (Micheli and Manzoni, 2010). Some organisations believe that PM brings efficiency savings which make an investment in a system worthwhile whereas there are those unconvinced; the 'inherently positive vs necessary evil' argument. Some of the negative traits are suggested to be conflicts associated with the higher visibility of performance, increased workload, and shifts in the power structure (Franco-Santos, Lucianetti and Bourne, 2012, p. 94). Nudurupati (2003) was able to show that when implement and designed properly, performance measures enable a greater pro-active management style which has a positive effect on overall business performance. However, the research of Bititci *et al.* (2006), suggests that designing and imbedding a performance measurement system takes time to evolve and changes in management style and organisational culture take time to evolve along with it. Developing a new performance measurement system can take months to complete and may be a cyclical process that does not cease; the system should be a never-ending search for perfection (Andersen and Fagerhaug, 2002, p. 112).

Collaborative projects are generally not a large and mature network or virtual organisation; they are likely to have to go through a 'founding period' of implementing organisational controls (Cardinal, Sitkin and Long, 2004). It might be expected that collaborations, much like SMEs, do not put much emphasis on a planning stage of managing performance, avoiding setting missions and values so that they can perceive themselves to be more 'flexible' (Ates *et al.*, 2013, p. 44). This approach however has a negative effect on communication and understanding of the shared and common goals. The multiple constituency view is that partners in a collaboration will need to be aware of each other's performance indicator. This however is challenging as a partner may deliberately conceal their indicators and, or, have multiple agendas, some of which remain hidden. Without a transparent performance system tensions will exist, for example in leadership, if there are inconsistencies with what output is expected (Mohr, 2006). As previously discussed, PM

systems can raise issues of trust and specificity, as results will be misleading if the indicators have not been correctly established and runs the risk of producing data that is inappropriate (Micheli and Mari, 2014).

In general, unless there is a deep commitment from organisational leaders, then the implementation of any new PMM system is likely to fail (Kaplan, 2001). One of the difficulties encountered by the third sector is to know to whom they are accountable and what should actually be measured (Thomson, 2011; Moxham, 2014). Private funders, or donors, of third sector organisations either do not see the need for performance measures, or do not want their resource dedicated to gathering data which may not be of use to the aims of the project or organisations funded (Cunningham and Ricks, 2004). Creating a shared or compatible performance measurement system in an inter-organisational collaboration is particularly challenging when seeking a consensus on knowledge transfer and creation, especially when performance indicators in this area are not equitable (Mohr, 2006). Ultimately it may simply be the case that the need to invest in a performance measurement system is seen as a waste of resource if the measurements are not what are used to drive key decision making internally, nor to satisfy the requirements of any external stakeholders (Moxham, 2014, p. 717).

### 2.5.6 Summary

PMM needs to be researched in different contexts (Franco-Santos, Lucianetti and Bourne, 2012; Melnyk *et al*., 2014). The literature regarding organisational control theory is generally based on the exercise of control within the single organisation, but authors have recently begun to look beyond this to dyadic or complex inter-organisational relationships (Liu, Borman and Gao, 2014). One of the key arguments in the PMM literature looks to explore the influence on overall performance (Franco-Santos, Lucianetti and Bourne, 2012; Melnyk *et al*., 2014). Regarding this research however, it might be more fundamental to question what aspect of performance, in the context of not for profit inter-organisational regional cluster collaborations, should be measured and managed and why? What is to be controlled and measured may require a contingent approach to discover the requisite fit (Franco-Santos, Lucianetti and Bourne, 2012). Among the challenges are the dynamic nature of collaborations, so a snap-shot of collaborations may be the most sensible approach, given that 'organisations seldom achieve a steady state, they move from one temporary steady-state to another' (Melnyk *et al*., 2014, p. 176).

It is said that a PM system's necessary and sufficient conditions 'exists if financial and non-financial performance measures are used to operationalize strategic objectives' (Franco-Santos *et al.*, 2007, cited in Franco-Santos, Lucianetti and Bourne, 2012, p. 80). This definition is a suitable option for this research as it is not restricted by the level of the organisation which is being evaluated, allowing for simple methods of data collection and process of information. However, as this research developed it uncovered in the in the field PMM systems that are not well resourced or mature. Therefore, the notion of a PM system that fits with this research is one that focuses on PMM as organisational control systems (Simons, 1994; Tessier and Otley, 2012; Smith and Bititci, 2017). This definition of PMM ignores systems that are purely financial, for example budgeting or activity-based costing systems, as they are not linked to organisational strategy. While the literature is rich in why PM systems have been adopted, the consequences of adopting a particular PM system is less well understood, lacking consensus (Franco-Santos, Lucianetti and Bourne, 2012).

Theory and practice of performance measures should go beyond simply more and more precise measures, focusing rather on the adequate number of indicators to assist in decision making (Micheli and Mari, 2014). It is suggested that this can be achieved through adopting a model-based view of PM, as opposed to a truth-based view which only focuses on the empirical data such as financial figures. The model-based view recognises that the interpretation of the measured object comes from the subject, and therefore the design and implementation of the system must be done considering the context and the goals for which the measurement itself is being taken (Micheli and Mari, 2014, p. 153). This has validity when considering the numerous goals and interpretations of success within a collaboration across the individual organisations and the individuals who represent them with the likelihood of a convergence of subjective viewpoints on purpose and outcomes. Smith and Bititci (2017) suggest achieving an appropriate balance between the two dimensions of organisational control results in improved overall performance. This leads into this research's key discussion point as Smith and Bititci (2017) allude to a performance optimum to be struck in finding balance. The idea of developing a conceptual handle for the theory of collaborative advantage reflects on the contrary prescriptions that can be found in managing the complex reality of the inter-organisational collaboration. Collaborations are not a static organisation which would suggest that finding a balance in social and technical controls may only be temporary in that moment of isolated reflection. Contextual factors of PM systems still require investigating (Franco-Santos, Lucianetti and Bourne, 2012). One of the identified

needs in performance management research is understanding the structure and dynamics of collaborative enterprises, which is being addressed in this thesis. Through findings such as those presented here, others will be helped to develop a performance management process for collaborative enterprises. As argued by Busi and Bititci (2006, p. 18):

> Future operations management research should start by clearly understanding collaboration and its mechanisms, and developing theories, methods, tools and techniques to ensure that all partners involved can clearly define and manage common goals, objectives and responsibilities (Bruce, Leverick and Littler, 1995; Bititci *et al.*, 2003; Wognum and Faber, 2003; Barratt, 2004). A body of knowledge dedicated to collaboration and its foundation and methods is widely acknowledged to be the one research outcome that will most likely support companies in successfully create efficient collaborative enterprises.

The utopia for performance measurement is to understand it as a social system that enables learning in autopoietic networks (Bititci *et al.*, 2012); through researching the relationship of PMM and organisational learning in the pursuit of collaborative advantage, the aim of this research is to in some way add a level of understanding to this holistic challenge in the PMM literature. This research, therefore, considers that performance measurement and management impact the facilitation of organisational learning in inter-organisational collaborative projects. There are examples of various research methods adopted in the study of PM systems. Case study work has been valid and effective for developing theory around the phenomenon, (e.g. Bititci *et al.*, 2006; Kolehmainen, 2010), thus, as discussed in Chapter 3, there is rational in adopting a case study method for this research project. If PMM is an extension of organisational control (Bititci, 2015; Smith and Bititci, 2017), then the focus of this research is also required to be aware in the investigation how the choice of a particular combination of control modes interacts and affects organisational learning in the pursuit of a collaborative advantage.

## 2.6 Literature Review Findings

The theory of collaborative advantage (Huxham and Vangen, 2004) shows that current collaborations, if correctly managed, can yield positive outcomes which is termed 'collaborative advantage'. Organisational learning is something which enacts change in the organisation (Argote, 2011) and goes through explorative routines to identify or create knew knowledge before being exploited in the function or beliefs of an organisation or individual (Holmqvist, 2004; Argote, 2011). This can also be described as 'opening up' and then 'internalising' learning (Holmqvist, 2004) or has also been described as intuiting through to institutionalising (Crossan, Lane and White, 1999; Crossan, Maurer and White, 2011). Thus, it might be expected that a requirement to open up and then internalise would be a function that enables change or refinement in the processes of an existing collaboration.

Any change in the function of a collaboration combined with the multiple other themes of the theory of collaborative advantage will influence the outputs of the collaboration and become part of achieving a collaborative advantage or, given that not all learning is virtuous, collaborative inertia. This would be particularly true if and when organisational learning outcomes are imbedded with any explicit, assumed or hidden goals and objectives (Huxham and Vangen, 2005; Vangen and Huxham, 2011; Bryson, Ackermann and Eden, 2016). Organisational learning could also be a function in establishing or assessing the potential value in a collaboration (El Mokadem, 2010; Austin and Seitanidi, 2012a; 2012b). For example, it may effect change in the make-up of a collaboration, like membership or structures (Huxham and Vangen, 2000a), or could lead to a re-evaluation of the potential value in the collaborative advantage, that is, in the possible achievable goals and objectives (Bititci *et al.*, 2004; Parung and Bititci, 2008).

Further literature (Zollo, Reuer and Singh, 2002; Bititci *et al.*, 2007; Holmqvist, 2009; El Mokadem, 2010) suggest that singular organisations have the ability to learn to collaborate more successfully in the future, experiential learning, a transferable collaborative process, or in other words, taking the experiences from one collaborative context and applying them to other circumstances. While a transferable learning process exists, there is only limited understanding of this (Hibbert and Huxham, 2005). Similarly, there is a limited understanding about the facilitation and role of substantive learning in this context, the tacit or explicit knowledge, gained through creation or transfer within the collaboration, which can be used by the single organisation in any undefined context. Questions over the role of

organisational control modes in the role of enabling opening, explorative routines and the focusing exploitative routines in inter-organisational collaborative contexts remain in the literature (Holmqvist, 2009; Argote and Miron-Spektor, 2011; Crossan, Maurer and White, 2011; Bititci *et al.*, 2012; Melnyk *et al.*, 2014). While some research has gone into the governance models of collaborations and the differences of inclusiveness versus efficiency, this is at the early stages of understanding and there remains gaps in knowledge of its relationship with learning and collaborative effectiveness (Provan and Kenis, 2008; Cornforth, Hayes and Vangen, 2014; Vangen, Hayes and Cornforth, 2015).

From the review findings it can thus be proposed that performance measurement and management allow organisational learning to be facilitated and recognised (Kaplan and Norton, 1992; Kaplan, 2001; Henri, 2006; Franco-Santos *et al.*, 2007; Davenport, Harris and Shapiro, 2010; Melnyk *et al.*, 2014). It allows for outputs and outcomes to be measured which can determine if the collaboration is achieving collaborative advantage and, or, inertia, and learn from this (Argyris and Schön, 1978; Melnyk *et al.*, 2014). Similarly, it could be used as a tool to assess the potential value in pursuing a collaborative advantage. However, many questions remain of the role of PMM in both the not-for-profit sector and within inter-organisational contexts (Bititci *et al.*, 2012; Franco-Santos, Lucianetti and Bourne, 2012; Melnyk *et al.*, 2014; Moxham, 2014). It is further proposed that, as suggested by Argote (2011), characterising organisational learning enables firstly, the specificity of when experience has positive or negative effects on organisational processes and outcomes and, secondly, the design of experiential processes that promote organisational learning to become more deliberate.

To conclude this review, literature-based research propositions have been created and are visualised in a conceptual framework (Figure 2:6). These guide the rest of the study and the research explores the space between the arrows of the framework. By exploring the organisational learning processes that are occurring within each proposition, being influenced by the learning frameworks of Holmqvist (2004) and Crossan, Lane and White (1999), a richer explanation of the phenomena can be presented.

**Research Proposition 1:**

Performance measurement and management facilitates forms of organisational learning within the processes of an inter-organisational collaboration (Kaplan and Norton, 1992; Kaplan, 2001; Hibbert and Huxham, 2005; Henri, 2006; Franco-Santos *et al.*, 2007; Huxham and Hibbert, 2008; Davenport, Harris and Shapiro, 2010; Melnyk *et al.*, 2014).

**Research Proposition 2:**

Collaborative advantage and, or, inertia can be detected through performance measurement and management of the inter-organisational collaboration outputs which result in an opportunity for organisational learning (Argyris and Schön, 1978; Argyris, 2002; Melnyk *et al.*, 2014).

**Research Proposition 3:**

Organisational learning that occurs from either the processes of collaboration or the outputs of the collaboration can be applied:

a) To assesses the potential value that exists in the collaboration (Bititci *et al.*, 2004; Parung and Bititci, 2008; El Mokadem, 2010; Austin and Seitanidi, 2012a; 2012b).
b) Within the local collaborative context to make necessary adjustments to reduce collaborative inertia (Hibbert and Huxham, 2005; Huxham and Hibbert, 2008).

**Research Proposition 4:**

a) Organisational learning that occurs from either the processes of collaboration or the outputs of the collaboration can be transferred to an individual organisation from the current context, ready to be applied in a different collaborative context (Zollo, Reuer and Singh, 2002; Hibbert and Huxham, 2005; Bititci *et al.*, 2007; Holmqvist, 2009; El Mokadem, 2010).
b) Organisational learning that occurs from either the processes of collaboration or the outputs of the collaboration can be transferred to an individual organisation as knowledge to be applied to any context (Holmqvist, 2003; 2004; 2009; Hibbert and Huxham, 2005).

**Research Proposition 5:**

If the potential collaborative value is deemed unsatisfactory to a participating organisation it will choose to exit; if satisfactory it will proceed to collaborate (Bititci *et al.*, 2004; Huxham and Vangen, 2005; Huxham and Hibbert, 2008; El Mokadem, 2010; Austin and Seitanidi, 2012a; 2012b; Jang, Feiock and Saitgalina, 2016).

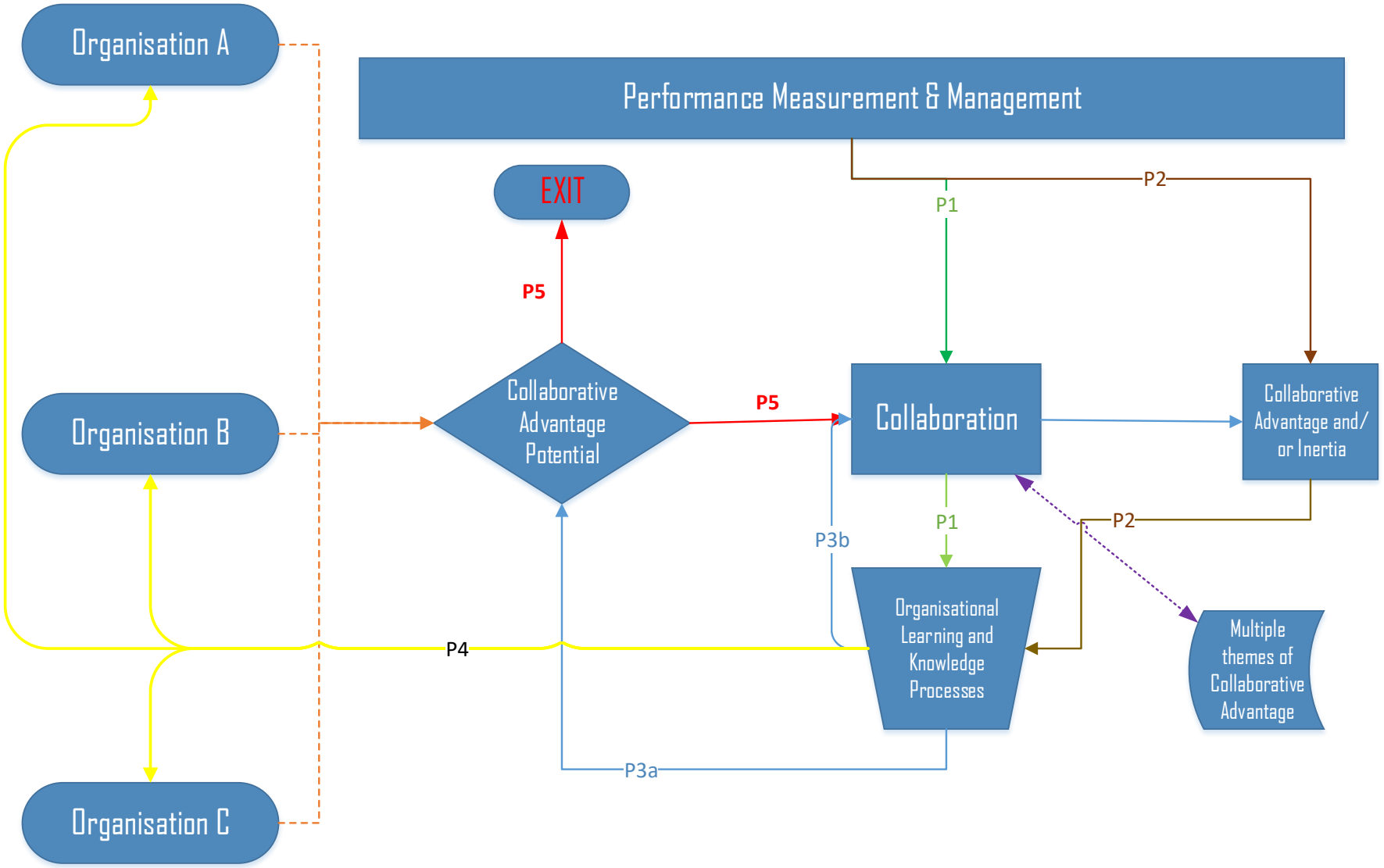


Figure 2:6 Conceptual Research Framework

### 2.6.1 Research Question

In short, the driver for this research was to consider if a formal performance measurement and management system was used by a complex inter-organisational collaboration, would it have learned to become more of a success. This led to a review of the literature of the theory of collaborative advantage, extant organisational learning themes and a look at the performance measurement and management literature to establish a relationship between PMM and organisational learning in inter-organisational collaborations. The findings of this review have been concluded with a set of propositions and conceptual framework, however there is insufficient empirical evidence to fully answer the initial research question. There are still gaps in the fine-grained detail of the phenomena in all three bodies of literature and therefore the validity of the study has been confirmed. Thus, the research question remains: **"How does performance measurement and management impact organisational learning in the development of collaborative advantage?"**

### 2.6.2 Summary

This chapter began with a literature review of the three theoretical fields that the research aim, objectives and question cover. Doing this has enabled a conceptual framework to be drawn that reflects this extant knowledge, supported by five research propositions. The findings of the literature review are now used to develop a methodology and design to test the propositions and to search for any other possible factors involved within their relationship.

# 3 Methodology

The philosophical understanding of nature and how we know it is still of great relevance to world of research, beyond a simple acceptance that scientific practices work, and it is argued that 'taking philosophical problems literally and seriously helps us avoid arbitrariness in our judgements' (Cruickshank, 2002a, p. 66). The following were highlighted as the three salient factors in the value of correctly identifying and understanding philosophical issues in research by Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Jackson (2012). Firstly, it assists the design phase of research, identifying the data that is to be gathered and how it is to be collected, secondly, which research designs are most suited to providing full answers to the research question posited and finally it opens the researcher to the possibility of considering and finding research designs which are beyond those bounded by past experience.

## *3.1 Philosophy*

### 3.1.1 Research Paradigm

A paradigm is a pattern that is used to conceptualise the constructs to which things conform. According to Liddell and Scott (1996) paradigm come from the ancient Greek παράδειγμα (Paradeigma) which originally meant either a 'pattern' or a 'model' but evolved in Aristotle's "Metaphysics" (Barnes, 1984) to encapsulate the ideas of Plato to cover exemplars to which all earthly things conform. It further developed in Aristotle's works "Prior Analytics" and "Rhetoric" to mean an 'argument' or 'proof from example'. In terms of research in social science the world is either represented entirely objectively, independently of the subject, or it is entirely dependent on the constructs within the mind of the subject, subjectivism. These two paradigms of social science therefore guide and frame academic enquiry, where research is bounded by such philosophical understanding (Kuhn, 1970). It is for this reason that Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Jackson (2012) place such importance in reminding the researcher of the worth of carefully selecting the research methods with a complete awareness of the philosophical repercussions of selecting and designing a research topic within one or the other paradigm. Repercussions include, but are not limited to, ethical considerations such as how to create relationships with participants in the research and how data gathering will be conducted, stored and presented (Bailey, 2007). Similarly, Hussey and Hussey (1997) emphasise that the researcher's paradigm will guide the research project in its entirety, thus each researcher has their particular set of interdependent philosophical assumptions and stances (Rocco *et al.*, 2003).

## *3.2 Methodological Options*

### 3.2.1 Ontology

Ontology refers to the assumptions we make about reality Easterby-Smith, Lyles and Tsang (2008), whether its nature is either objective or subjective, deriving from the metaphysical branch of philosophy. It questions whether social reality is external to, or integral within, the constructions of one's mind.

#### 3.2.1.1 Objectivism

As Figure 3:1 lays out, the ontological positions are understood as objectivism or subjectivism. Objectivism views the reality of social entities as existing separately from social actors. Therefore, objectivism maintains that 'meaning, and therefore meaningful reality, exists as such apart from the operation of any consciousness' (Crotty, 1998, p. 8). Under the objectivism paradigm, social phenomena are substantiated entirely as external truths which are beyond our reach and influence, thus meaning of reality therefore already exists 'out there' (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). It is waiting to be uncovered, exhibited as logical truth, with its objective observer, side by side "παράδειγμα." Objectivism therefore posits that reality can be known a-priori and follows, at least historically, a Platonic or Cartesian rationalism (Bhaskar and Callinicos, 2003).

#### 3.2.1.2 Subjectivism (Constructivism)

Constructivists on the contrary view knowledge as entirely dependent on context and time, that is, this ontology views reality only as a consequence of one's own cognition, which is therefore socially constructed and is given meaning only by those who are experiencing it (Easterby-Smith, Lyles and Tsang, 2008). This viewpoint of reality requires researchers to interact with the subject of study to collect data. Understanding phenomena requires it to be studied under its entire context and cannot be detached from it without losing meaning (Krauss, 2005). If meaning is something which is constructed, not an objective truth awaiting discovery, then within this knowledge paradigm meaning can be built in alternative and even contrary ways, regardless of it being the same experience in question; social phenomena is given meaning through social interaction and are in continuous flux (Bryman and Bell, 2015). The belief of social constructionism is that truths are a construct of theories and points of view and reality are subjective and multiple as seen by individuals. It thus focuses on the ways that people make sense of the world especially through shared experience (Easterby-Smith, Lyles and Tsang, 2008).

These polarising differences between the objective and subjective paradigms serve to show that, as individuals, our perceptions of reality are deep-seated in our ontological assumptions. Having recognised these contrary positions of viewing reality the task of the researcher is to deliberate upon the nature of knowledge within that reality and how it might be obtained and expressed with validity.

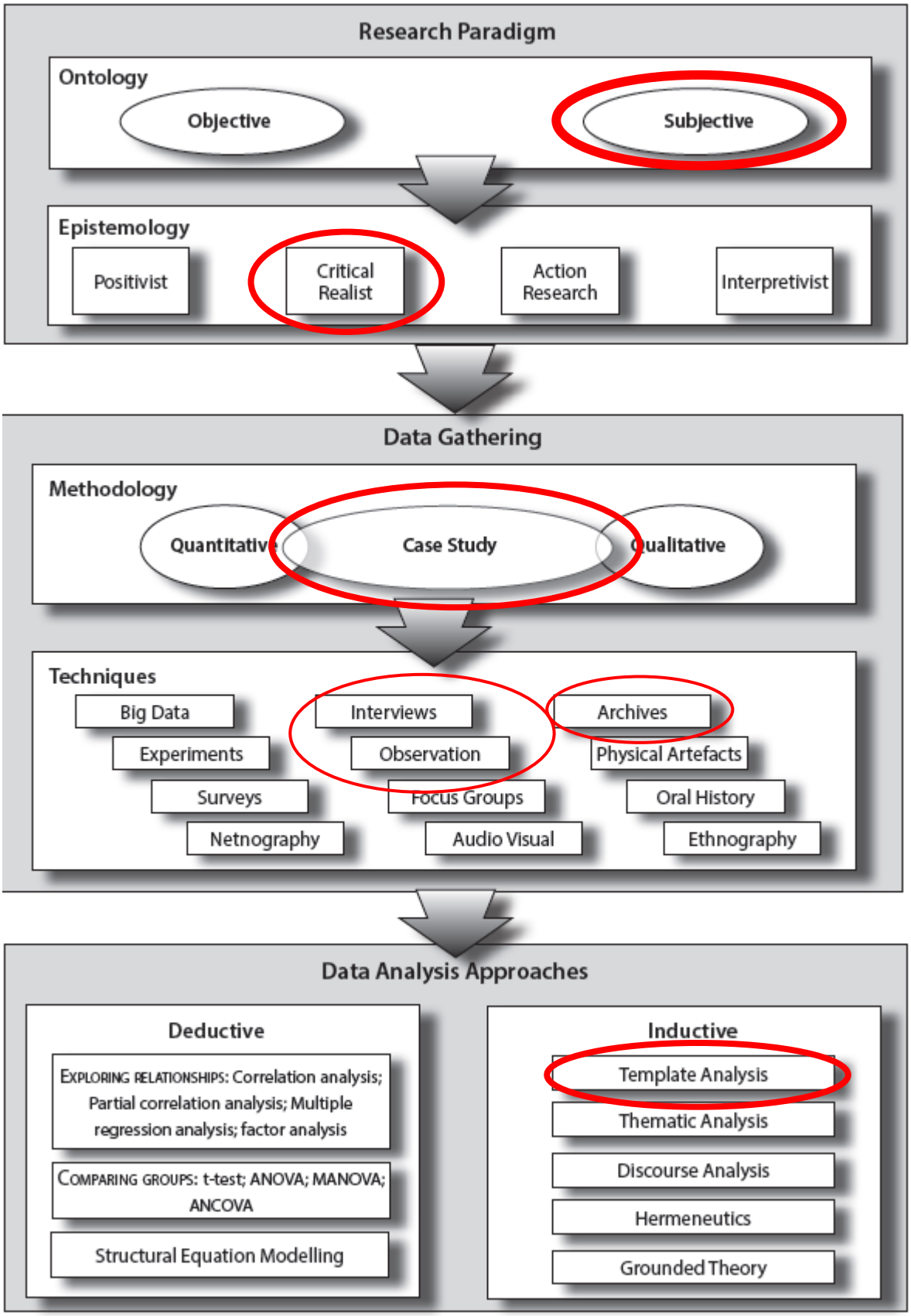


**Figure 3:1 Research Methods Map**
(O'Gorman, 2015)

### 3.2.2 Epistemology

#### 3.2.2.1 Positivist Paradigm:

The positivist paradigm is the epistemological flow from ontological objectivism. Under this paradigm knowledge of reality is achieved through direct observations and measurements of phenomenon independently, detached from the researcher (Easterby-Smith, Lyles and Tsang, 2008). Constructs can be broken down to be understood, tested and measured (Krauss, 2005). The purpose of knowledge from a positivist standpoint is to describe the phenomenon that is experienced. Singular in nature and existing outwith the subject, truth is both absolute and discoverable (Hussey and Hussey, 1997).

It becomes clear that such a perspective of reality has critical consequences for both the application of research and the relationship between observations of phenomenon and theoretical understanding (Blumberg, 2011). Findings of research would be the same regardless of whom is carrying out the research and when, provided that some specific conditions are maintained on each occasion. This outlook accepts that, because observable truths are external and objective, they are not subject to change simply by being observed, thus research is accomplished free of bias or value free (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). The positivist stance is suited for deductive research with a quantitative data set. Theoretical hypotheses are tested against empirical data and are accepted or rejected (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Jackson, 2012).

#### 3.2.2.2 Interpretivist Paradigm:

On the opposite of the epistemological spectrum (Figure 3:1) is interpretivism. This paradigm critiques positivism and the deductive research approach that would most commonly use quantification techniques and methods to measure causal relationships. ‘In order to understand the actor’s world, one must interpret it, and hence the label ‘interpretivism.’’ (Cassell and Nadin, 2008, p. 73). Those who see the social world from this stance do not believe it can be understood by objective means and principals of the natural sciences (Bryman & Bell, 2015). It is to be interpreted through human cognition and in the meanings of human actions, these are the principals of this paradigm’s foundation. As such, simple fundamental laws lack the adequacy to comprehend the complexities of what are social experiences (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Jackson, 2012). As a result of the social world being understood by the meanings individuals give to it and interpreting meaning from their perspective, social phenomena can only be understood through observing it in its totality (Krauss, 2005). Thus, interpretivism posits valid knowledge as a matter of interpretation

which is not and cannot be grounded in an objective reality. This interpretation of the social world is unceasing; a constant process of individuals interpreting the actions of others with whom they interact which in turn leads to adjustment of their meanings and actions (Saunders, 2016).

From this approach, what is understood about the social world are words and concepts that have arisen from human interventions, which in turn, have themselves come from social interactions (Alvesson and Kärreman, 2011). Indeed, as the negotiation of a shared definition of a social situation carries through the conscious thoughts of the actors of the situation, multiple interpretations of a single phenomenon can be shown to be valid and true (Gray, 2000). A further consequence of this is the belief by some that the generalisability of findings does not carry such weight of importance (Burns and Burns, 2008; Blumberg, 2011), with an assumption that research into a phenomenon cannot be value-free. As researchers are interpreting and representing an understanding of the way in which other subjects interpret the social world, the researchers' own views and motivations are uncovered as their understanding is also socially constructed (Chia, 2002). Thus, in employing interpretive methods the researcher takes a role in the research process and cannot be separated from it (Saunders, 2016). These methods are designed to try and capture the subjective meanings of the individual from their own individual perspectives (Gray, 2000).

#### 3.2.2.3 Critical Realist Paradigm:

In between these extreme paradigms is found critical realism. This alternative view 'recognize[s] that our knowledge of the social world is always fallible and open to continued revision, but the social world itself has a real basis that is not just constructed through perception or discourse' (Spicer, Alvesson and Kärreman, 2009, p. 540). It might be argued that critical realism is better introduced under ontology than epistemology as it introduces questions of the reality of nature itself, and not only about how one accesses or gains knowledge of it. Nonetheless, for purposes of the discussion in relation to this research, following and keeping with Figure 3:1, the critical realist paradigm will be treated as an alternative epistemological consideration. It is however an area of philosophy which was introduced as a rejection of the 'epistemic fallacy of Empirical Realism' (Bhaskar, 1978; Cruickshank, 2002b; Fairclough, 2005).

This critical outlook was developed by those who were concerned that other philosophical discourse, empirical realism, sought to 'denude the world of meaning' (Bhaskar and Callinicos, 2003, p. 96). Bhaskar's view was that both positivist and neo-Kantian philosophies address questions of an ontological matter through terms of reference more suited to epistemology. That is, those concerning the nature of being are answered by how the mind may have knowledge (Cruickshank, 2002a). Therefore, by distinguishing ontology from epistemology, the 'epistemic fallacy' of 'confusing the nature of reality with our knowledge of reality' can be avoided (Fairclough, 2005, p. 922). Critical realism assumes that the world 'out there' is real but that such an assumption can neither be proven nor disproven (Easton, 2010). Knowledge claims that have been made by applying critical realist meta-theory are fallible as this world cannot be directly accessed. The meta-theory has conceptual contents which become evident through critical dialogue with other theories, not by attempts to mirror reality, so they are therefore also fallible and open to re-interpretation or revision (Cruickshank, 2002b).

Not that philosophical underpinnings of social science research should be simplistic but that of critical realism might be one of the more challenging to explain. As Easton (2010, p119) points out: 'Critical realism assumes a transcendental realist ontology, an eclectic realist/interpretivist epistemology and a generally emancipatory axiology.' This means that ontologically 'the world exists independently of our knowledge of it' and epistemologically 'the conditions and social relations if the production of knowledge influences its content' (Sayer, 1992, p. 5). In more simplistic terms objects and things are real and not-socially constructed whereas our knowledge about how objects and things work is subjective and socially constructed. It is in contrast therefore with the other previously discussed forms of positivism and interpretivism, the latter arguing that meaning and knowledge are the result of the mind's categories (neo-Kantian) and the former, positivism, arguing that natural reality can be directly accessed via observation. Cruickshank (2002a, p. 58) argues that either of these more fixed realisms 'gives us a 'closed systems ontology.'' This argument is against viewing the world as being made of fixed regularities, closed to any external change. It rejects positions of positivism and interpretivism which define causal laws in terms of observable regularities which the mind can directly perceive. These views presuppose that we are in a world of fixed regularities, because the 'regularities perceived are taken to be relations of natural necessity' (Cruickshank, 2002a, p. 58).

In one sense, within critical realism, there is a borrowing of epistemology from the constructionists or at least a slight homogeny as ‘meaning has to be understood, it cannot be measured or counted and hence there is always an interpretative or hermeneutic element in social science’ (Sayer, 2000, p. 17). However, critical realism rejects the assertion of the strong social constructionist stand which holds that there are no independent methods of establishing the validity of socially constructed knowledge. For a critical realist it is possible to know reality, whereas someone who would consider themselves as a constructionist only concentrates on the meaning of constructions made by social actors (Easton, 2010). Rather than being entirely value-free, as in positive research, or value-laden, as in interpretive research, realism is, instead, value aware; conscious of the values of both human systems and researchers (Krauss, 2005).

#### 3.2.2.4 Considering Action Research

There has been a shift in researching performance measurement and management to a more interpretivist epistemology, treating the phenomena as a social construct (Bititci *et al.*, 2012). Following completion of the evaluation report on behalf of the Clyde Scouts for the KSGC (Section 1.2), an action research study was proposed to the key stakeholders of the collaboration. This was to investigate how the interventions, especially performance measurement and management related ones, would impact the organisations; if and how they could create a joint performance system and how this would change performance and learning in the collaborative project.

Action research could have been suitable for the KSGC case as it would have allowed observation of the impact of specific interventions (Eden and Huxham, 1996); empowered participants to contribute to the design of the intervention and analysis of the results (Coughlan and Coghlan, 2002; Burns *et al.*, 2014); and is a suitable methodology for theory being developed in incremental steps (Coughlan and Coghlan, 2002, p. 222). Action research is criticised for its lack of repeatability (Eden and Huxham, 1996) and reliance on the experience of the researcher (Coughlan and Coghlan, 2002) but it is argued that the advantages are not outweighed if the research is seeking to solve the practical problems that organisational members face (Susman and Evered, 1978). Different research methods are able to illuminate different facets of the phenomena and qualitative methods tend to be better at describing how things change over time (Easterby-Smith, Lyles and Tsang, 2008; Bryson, Ackermann and Eden, 2016).

The proposal was to present a variety of performance measurement tools as interventions to the representatives of each member organisation within the selected project. It would have been expected the use of the performance measures to be adjusted through the life of the intervention to meet the project needs. Feedback from stakeholders would have been collected throughout but central to the data collection would have been instances of organisational learning emerging and presenting themselves through these measures as the members sought to achieve collaborative advantage. Action research in this context may have given the ability to explore the applied measures through facilitating changes, monitoring and reflecting via an iterative and participative research process. Frequent observations and cross-level dialogue with participants might have allowed the complex nature of learning through performance measures to unfold. The decision not to pursue an action research methodology was taken out of the researcher's hands. Effectively access and agreement had been granted by the KSGC collaboration once the evaluation report had been disseminated, however upon further reflection they agreed to consider the report's recommendations without further information or consultation from the researcher. Given the time constraints of completing a PhD research thesis, the decision may have been taken by the researcher in any case. As noted in the literature, it is difficult to measure the outcomes of learning given the time lag between learning, implementing change and measuring performance outcomes (Inkpen and Crossan, 1995).

#### 3.2.2.5 Philosophical Stance

This study recognises that it is vital for the philosophical position of the researcher to be explicit which helps to ensure the methodological choices are suited to both the nature and objectives of the enquiry and the phenomenon in question. As observed by Alvesson and Kärreman (2011, p. 1196): 'Relevant aspects of a phenomenon under study are not exclusively decided by way of origins or how we access it, they are ultimately decided by the way the phenomenon challenges our understandings.'

To address the research question of this enquiry and reflecting on the previous discussion of ontological and epistemological stances a critical realist stance is assumed. Taking this approach, allows this research to contribute to theory on the phenomenon by firstly referring to extant theories; secondly by altering or combining extant theories; and thirdly inductively generating new concepts and theories (von Krogh, Rossi-Lamastra and Haefliger, 2012). Following this paradigm in organisational research it is the organisation itself which is seen

as an entity in the real world. A real-world entity has both the power to act and the power to be acted upon by others. This relationship that exists among the entities, which is known as a mechanism, is what causes events. For critical realists, observations of, or experimentations of, the world around us need to happen in open spaces, not confined to artificially enclosed environments, and in this way science can begin to explain how these causal mechanisms function (Cruickshank, 2002a). There is a distinction between: the real world; the events that are actually created by the real world; and the events which are observed and recorded as the empirical. This flows from the assumption that ontologically there is a reality but that understanding this reality is often a challenge. Therefore, 'we will always be surmising about the nature of the real' (Easton, 2010, p. 128). Critical realists believe that observed events are produced by the different ways that causal mechanisms interact. These observed events change as the form of interaction changes. The causal mechanisms that underlie the observed effects portends that the observed regularities are both open to change and contingent (Cruickshank, 2002a, p. 58).

Phenomena can be defined 'as regularities that are unexpected, that challenge existing knowledge (including the extant theory) and that are relevant to scientific discourse' (von Krogh, Rossi-Lamastra and Haefliger, 2012, p. 278). As will be further discussed in the design research section, the phenomena under study can be captured, described and documented, as well as conceptualised to allow for appropriate theorising (von Krogh, Rossi-Lamastra and Haefliger, 2012). The research question is seeking the explanation of causal powers in a phenomenon, which as Sayer (2000, p. 14) points out, is not an uncommon philosophical stance to assume: 'In both everyday life and social science, we frequently explain things by reference to causal powers.' The critical realist distinguishes between the 'real', the 'actual', and the 'empirical': the 'real' is the domain of structures with their associated 'causal powers'; the 'actual' is the domain of events and processes; the 'empirical' is the part of the real and the actual that is experienced by social actors. This is what has been termed as a 'stratified ontology', which sees processes, or events, and structures as different strata of social reality with different properties. This is the central idea of critical realism; that natural and social reality should be understood as an open stratified system of objects with causal powers. Fairclough further explains causality as:

> …not a (Humean) 'constant conjunction' view according to which a causal relation between x and y entails a regular (and in principle predictable) relation such that where

> x appears, y will appear. On the contrary, the production of such 'constant conjunctions' require human intervention, notably in the form of experiments (which are generally more possible in natural than in social sciences) (Fairclough, 2005, p. 992).

It can be concluded therefore that an object is real if it has causal power capable of producing effects. This defines the ontology of reality as an open stratified system of natural objects with causal mechanisms, which under some conditions are actualized to produce events, some of which are experienced in the domain of the empirical (Morton, 2006). It could be argued that the critical realist stance is somewhat contradictory, claiming simultaneously that our knowledge of objects is socially constructed but the objects themselves are not. This tension is resolved however 'by arguing that the world is socially constructed but not entirely so. The "real" world breaks through and sometime destroys the complex stories that we create in order to understand and explain the situations we research' (Easton, 2010, p.120).

Finally, although much of the theory of collaborative advantage has been developed by employing research-oriented action-research (RO-AR), this research shares the view that 'criticality within a discipline [is] essential [and] only by seeing the same data through the different theoretical lenses employed by different researchers can understanding of some of the features of the real world occur' (Easton, 2010 p.123).

### 3.2.3 Research Strategy

Before selecting a methodological approach, a research strategy should be decided upon to ensure the approach to theory development is appropriate (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Jackson, 2012; Saunders, 2016). Simplistically, if the approach is to test extant theory from the literature then a deductive approach is used. However, if the objective is to explore themes and patterns from a phenomenon to generate new theory then the approach should be inductive.

Deductive research seeks to confirm or falsify a theoretical hypothesis. Hypotheses are developed by articulating a premise or research question about the relationship between two or more variables followed by research a possible explanation from the extant theoretical literature. These can then be tested under carefully designed evaluation criteria which will include data collection and analysis. The findings from the data collection either confirm or falsify a hypothesis and depending on the size and scale of study an argument can be put

forward for generalisation. Conversely, inductive research seeks to induce theoretical explanation by observing the data captured from a phenomenon. It is less rigid which can allow for alternative explanations of the phenomenon to emerge by identifying themes and searching for patterns either within a single case or across multiple cases. Barratt, Choi and Li (2011) claim a methodological confusion exists among some researchers whereby inductive logic is being applied to research that claims to be deductive. It is argued that for research to be purely deductive it should not argue exploratory purposes (Barratt, Choi and Li, 2011, p. 340). They cite examples of this in case-study based research that uses within-case and cross-case analysis techniques to explain phenomena instead of employing each case as an individual entity for confirmation or falsification of theory (Barratt, Choi and Li, 2011 p.338). This methodological hybrid approach is known as abduction (Suddaby, 2006; Saunders, 2016). Abduction does not simply test theory through data or build theory from data but takes a combined approach to seek a plausible theoretical explanation to a phenomenon.

It is this latter approach, abduction, which is adopted in this research. It is exploring what is known of the causal relationship that performance measurement and management has with organisational learning in collaborations and aims to add to theory beyond testing the extant knowledge. As is now discussed in the next sections the design of the research has incorporated both deductive and inductive methods. Deductively there are literature-based review propositions which have led to the design of a case-study protocol. However, it is exploratory in the data analysis stage, searching to both confirm or falsify the propositions and for any emerging themes or patterns. This involves within-case and cross case analysis which are more commonly used as inductive methods (Barratt, Choi and Li, 2011).

## *3.3 Case Study Research*

Following from the above section which discussed the philosophical options available with an explanation as to how they have informed this research, this section expands on the methodological choices of the research design and data gathering techniques. A qualitative methodology has been chosen as it complements the philosophical position of the research (Figure 3:1), employing a multi-case study approach which is deemed to be a suitable method for accomplishing the aims and objectives of the study. Qualitative research and qualitative data are not necessarily the one and same thing. Simply because research has used qualitative data collecting techniques does not qualify the research in the epistemological sense as

qualitative: ‘The key here is to convey the theory building strategy clearly while avoiding confusion, philosophical pitfalls’ (Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007, p. 28). A justification for this methodology and its associate data gathering techniques follows leading to the subsequent discussion of data analysis approaches.

### 3.3.1 Defining a Case Study

Case studies have their own characteristics as a method of research and there is an argument that suggests it should not be simply categorised as a form of qualitative research (Yin, 2018). Case studies allow for phenomena to be understood thoroughly and in great detail (Easton, 2010). Whether multiple or single, they can focus on one or more specific organisations, individuals or groups that function within an organisation; customers, employees, suppliers, business units etc. They generally involve a detailed investigation of phenomena occurring in its real-world environment over a period of time (Hartley, 2004). Case studies are suitable for a range of purposes which include describing phenomena and subsequent theory building and, or, testing. Case research can therefore be defined as ‘a research method that involves investigating one or a small number of social entities or situations about which data are collected using multiple sources of data and developing a holistic description through an iterative research process’ (Easton 2010, p.119).

### 3.3.2 Why Case Studies?

Yin (2018) promotes the benefits of case study when following either a subjective or objective ontological enquiry, as they can be applied whereby phenomena and context are not readily distinguishable from one another, and as such the phenomenon is to be researched within its context, that is, within a real-world setting. From a positivist point of view this is applicable as the researcher can observe or investigate phenomenon and be guided by *a-priori* theoretical propositions and from a critical realist paradigm the researcher can engage with the subjects of the case and construct meaning through multiple experiences of it. It works for both the interpretivist and critical realist paradigms because the data is collected by engaging the phenomena in the real-world context that the cases have occurred. Eisenhardt and Graebner (2007) however argue the benefits of case studies in the more positivist paradigm whereby generalisability of cases leads to more reliable and robust theoretical conclusions.

Within multi case research for the purposes of theory building the resultant theory can be parsimonious. This is due to the researcher only being able to retain the relationships that

have been replicated across the cases and can be presented as generalisable to each one. The parsimony of theory though should not be viewed as a criticism as it shows a repeatability which characterises superior theory (Eisenhardt, 2007, p. 30). Case studies are particularly useful for describing complex social phenomena in detail, answering 'how' or 'why' questions (Yin, 2018). Collaborations involve complex social processes and require qualitative data to offer the required insight. Using cases assist theory building particularly well when, as this research does, a 'how' question is posited (Eisenhardt, 2007). Not only are case studies an ideal methodology for researching how and why questions they also support investigations that aim to develop new theory and ideas, indeed 'theory building is a particular area where cases are strong' (Voss, Tsikriktsis and Frohlich, 2002, p. 197).

Yin (2018) argues that case studies can be used not only to build theory but to test propositions and to describe phenomena. Eisenhardt (2007) cautions against allowing subjectivism to creep into analysis of a case study but claims that research analysis carried out through closely and honestly adhering to the collected data is able to claim objectivity. However, as discussed in the previous section, this research is of the view that meaning of the real world is gained through its interaction of events, which are experienced by the subjects in the domain of the empirical. As Easton argues in support of such a critical realist approach to case study research methods:

> Critical realism is particularly well suited as a companion to case research. It justifies the study of any situation, regardless of the numbers of research units involved, but only if the process involves thoughtful in-depth research with the objective of understanding why things are as they are (Easton 2010, p.119).

According to Yin (2018), generalising theoretical case studies can be achieved through the single-case analysis. This research has chosen to follow a multi-case research model because the cases that present themselves are not uncommon and the findings from the multiple cases augment external validity, that is, the analytical conclusions from having multiple cases strengthens the theoretical findings. This is expanded on in the next section however, in brevity, such an approach to theory building that utilises rich empirical data from cases creates engaging, reliable and accurate theory (Eisenhardt, 2007).

Although each case selected in this research is relatively clearly bounded, the complexity of the phenomenon in question, the inter-organisational collaboration, gives credence to taking a critical realist case approach as it is thought to constitute an ideal fit (Easton, 2010). Indeed,

where there is likely to be a complex entanglement of themes in the phenomenon in question then the case study approach enables the researcher to manage and explain through this complexity, even only if in a restrictive number of occurrences (Easton, 2010).

### 3.3.3 Case Study Research Design

Yin (2003) identifies five key sections of research design for research utilising the case study research, these are:

1) Research question.
2) Propositions
3) The unit of analysis
4) The logic linking data to the propositions
5) The criteria of interpreting the findings

Yin (2003) goes on to suggest that the construction of a preliminary theory related to the research area in question will allow for an effective research design, covering the above five sections. The research's framework and question(s) should, in most instances, be created from both the research objectives and the extant literature that surrounds the identified problem or phenomenon. This is recommended whether theory is being created, further developed, or tested. Using this as the departure point for research is helpful therefore as it gives the researcher a prior view (*a-priori*) of the general constructs and concepts under investigation and their relationships (Voss, Tsikriktsis and Frohlich, 2002).

#### 3.3.3.1 Research Questions

There are a number of research question forms, and some of these do suggest some type of causal relationship (Miles and Huberman, 1994). 'A critical realist approach to case research involves developing a research question that identifies a research phenomenon of interest, in terms of discernible events, and asks what causes them to happen' (Easton, 2010 p128). The initial research question forms part of the initial research design (Voss, Tsikriktsis and Frohlich, 2002) and in this case it was decided to have one which preceded the conceptual framework.

The how and why questions types lend themselves well to theory development (Voss, Tsikriktsis and Frohlich, 2002). In adopting a critical realist approach, the research question should be formed so as to seek the cause of any events that occurred which are associated with the phenomenon. Under this philosophical stance social phenomenon is to be understood only through the recording and analysing of the associated events that take place due to the

intervention of actors (Easton, 2010 p.123). This research has followed this rule by asking a 'how' question (Section 2.6.1). Research case studies should be both transparent and methodical, with evidence of the process employed and the just use of the data gathered (Yin, 2018). The critical realist is searching for causal explanations, which are consistent with the data, of the processes which are taking place under certain conditions via particular mechanisms (Easton, 2010). Regardless of the inductiveness of the research approach having some notion of the intended constructs or categories of study is required, especially when aiming to build theory. Developing this can be done through the creation of a conceptual framework that will guide the research (Voss, Tsikriktsis and Frohlich, 2002). With regards to this research the development of a theoretical conceptual framework and initial research question were explored in (Section 2.6.1) and were based on both the literature review and the initial observations of the pilot case study.

#### 3.3.3.2 Unit of Analysis

The third component of the research design is related to the problem of what the case is; the research unit of analysis. Each case study is a unit of analysis in case research which stem directly from the research questions and constructs (Voss, Tsikriktsis and Frohlich, 2002). Therefore, in this research, the units of analysis are the five identified complex, Scottish based, not for profit, inter-organisational collaborations. Researching using multiple cases allows the researcher to treat each case as an experimentation, a unit of analysis, all related to one another in order to claim logic of repeatability (Eisenhardt, 1989; Yin, 1994). The research was designed to investigate the management of collaborations relations from multiple perspectives of the collaborative organisations. Understanding the different views of collaborating partners will ensure the required depth of findings.

The latter two sections of this research design method process are related to the collection and analysis of data and evaluation of the findings from the case studies. These parts are discussed later in this chapter.

#### 3.3.3.3 Establishing Case Study Type

Case study design is effectively a plan for the steps required to address the study, ensuring that all collected data is relevant to its aims and objectives. The research design led to the decision to investigate the phenomena through multiple-cases. Inter-organisational collaborations, as discussed in Chapter 1, are becoming more commonplace especially within

the not-for-profit sector. This made it challenging to engage in either an unusual, extreme, rare, critical or revelatory case, all of which would give rational to engaging in the single case study (Yin, 2018). Using multiple case studies creates a stronger structure for theory building and by using more than one case the researcher is able to present a more accurate and generalizable theory (Eisenhardt, 2007 p. 27). Once identified that the rational for a single-case research design could not be justified for this study it was concluded that the multi-case analysis approach was the most suitable for addressing it with rigour. Although this approach is not without its disadvantages it can be argued that this approach provides a greater opportunity for generalisability and thus provides findings which are more robust (Yin, 2018). This required consideration of how the study into each individual case could be replicated, which follows replication logic.

| Case Choice | Advantages | Disadvantages |
|---|---|---|
| Single Cases | Greater depth | Limits on the generalisability of conclusions drawn. Biases such as misjudging the representativeness of a single event and exaggerating easily available data. |
| Multiple Cases | Augment external validity, help guard against observer bias | More resource needed; less depth per case |
| Retrospective Cases | Allow collection of data on historical events | May be difficult to determine cause and effect, participants may not recall important events. |
| Current Cases | Overcome the problem of retrospective cases | Have long elapsed time and thus may be difficult to do. |

**Table 3:1 Case Study Options**
From Voss, Tsikriktsis and Frohlich, 2002, p.203

Voss, Tsikriktsis and Frohlich (2002) believe there is not much to differentiate between current or retrospective case types, other than retrospective case selection allows to sample either successful or failed case types. This is because researching current case studies involves collecting historical accounts or archival data. Subjects that are requested to recall detail from the past are either subject to bias or unable to recall all the detail, or even both.

Post-rationalisation is a potential downside to collecting data from retrospective cases. The advantages and disadvantages of case choice are summarised in Table 3:1.

## 3.4 Case Study Protocol

In order to correctly prepare for case study research, a case study protocol was developed. This assisted in creating interview questions under the themes which were to be investigated in each case (Appendix A). Given that this is a multi-case study research, taking the time and care to design a protocol reduces the risk of data being collected in a way that can be deemed either unreliable or unrepeatable. Further to this, the protocol adds to building replication logic and aids any redesign of the research while maintaining rigour. Commonly, a case study protocol includes an overview of the case project, any on field processes or procedures, the interview questions or guide, and a template for the case study report (Yin, 2003). At the foundations of the case study protocol are the questions which are to be used in interviews, regardless of the structure of the interview, which in this study is a semi-structure model (Voss, Tsikriktsis and Frohlich, 2002).

To satisfy that the case study protocol is sufficiently robust and suitable for the enquiry at hand, a pilot case test study is normally carried out. This can also be satisfied through initial interviews within an organisation (Voss, Tsikriktsis and Frohlich, 2002). Among the benefits of carrying out a pilot case test is refining the procedures that are to be followed and the expected data collection methods employed, including interview questions (Yin, 2018). Case research that is well designed and carried out according to the protocol supports the drive to ensure the consequential results are both rigorous and relevant (Voss, Tsikriktsis and Frohlich, 2002). Once the researcher is completely satisfied only then should they engage in the actual data gathering techniques of the identified cases.

### 3.4.1 Selecting Cases

There is a two-step process to sampling (Miles and Huberman, 1994; Voss, Tsikriktsis and Frohlich, 2002); the first involves setting the boundaries of the research that links directly to the research question and the second is to create a framework that assists in developing the study. Following the sampling plans of Miles and Huberman, (1994) and Voss, Tsikriktsis and Frohlich (2002), the cases that were selected were done so in order to answer in the positive to the following questions:

- Is it relevant to the conceptual frame and research question?
- Can the phenomena to be studied appear?
- Is it one that enhances generalisability?
- Is it feasible?
- Is it ethical in terms of informed consent, potential benefits and risks and relationships with informants?

This research has taken advantage of the ability to create a research case study without having to carry out ethnographic or participant-observer data (Yin, 2018). Instead a mixture of current and retrospective cases was selected. Although it can be argued that two or three literal replications of cases can be sufficient to address a line of enquiry this research chose to investigate five in order to increase the degree of certainty that it would it bring (Yin 2018). The cases in this study where chosen for the purpose of developing theory and not simply to test extant theory, therefore the ones chosen were suitable for 'illuminating and extending relationships and logic among constructs' (Eisenhardt, 2007 p. 27).

A key decision in multi-case study research is how the cases are to be selected. Each case should serve a specific purpose within the overall scope of inquiry and the logic underlying case selection is either to predict similar results, a literal replication, or to predict contrasting results for predictable reasons, known as theoretical replication (Yin, 2003). Based on the research conceptual model and propositions, the characteristics of the collaborations that are used as criteria for selecting the case companies are:

- Access: A willingness to participate in the study
- Complexity: A minimum of 3 collaborating organisations
- Sector: Did not include For-Profit organisations
- Sampling: Offering a range of cross sector organisations to aid generalisability.

| Case Study Collaboration | Voluntary Sub-Sector Covered | Reason for Inclusion | Number of Organisations |
|---|---|---|---|
| KSGC | Culture and Recreation | An active collaboration that included 3 NPOs within the same city | 3 |
| Grey Space | Community, Social and Economic benefit | An active collaboration that included multiple NPOs within the same geographical region | 6+ |
| Give Me 5 | General Charitable Purpose | An active collaboration that included multiple NPOs within the same country | 6 |
| This is Our Faith | Education and Research | A retrospective collaboration that included multiple NPOs within the same country | 5 |
| Just Faith | Faith-Related | A retrospective collaboration that included 3 voluntary sector organisations with a national remit but all based in the one city. | 3 |

**Table 3:2 Selected Cases**

Once the initial observations of the KSGC (Section 1.2) were undertaken and the subsequent review of the extant literature, the criteria for case selection was to search out collaborative projects that were inter-organisational in the not for profit sector. Table 3:2 shows which case collaborations were selected to take part in this study, with a short rational of the suitability for inclusion in this research. Those that were deemed to be sufficiently complex enough were those that were set up beyond a dyadic partnership. In addition to these key features of the cases the final criteria in selection was being permitted access by three or more of the collaborating organisations to allow for multiple semi-structured interviews to take place.

Researchers are advised to have the courage to discard cases that do not fit the research design and sample structure (Voss, Tsikriktsis and Frohlich, 2002, p204). During this research initial data was collected from a collaboration which included ‘for-profit’ organisations, and these

were discounted from the final case research design. Using multiple cases might make analysis of the data more complicated but will often result in better theory. One way to developing a clear pattern across the data of the phenomenon in question is to utilise cases that, although related for theoretical reasons, have different or contrasting characteristics, thus demonstrating generalisability of the findings (Eisenhardt, 2007 p 27). Another consideration when selecting cases is to decide what characteristics or parameters should be held as constants across the sample (Voss, Tsikriktsis and Frohlich, 2002). This research selected cases all of which met the four criteria as detailed above. Five cases were selected for empirical research due to their level of complexity, involving a minimum of three individual organisations collaborating while the nature of each case can be described a process through which people work, across organisational boundaries, on areas of mutual interest. This type of collaboration is also known as a 'regional cluster' (Hibbert *et al.*, 2010). By making the collaborative context of the research explicit, the researcher is increasing the potential for understanding the phenomenon in question and, in addition, is able to clearly address the claimed over reliance on the private-sector as the principal source for research in the field of organisational learning within collaborations (Rashman, Withers and Hartley, 2009).

#### 3.4.1.1 Overview of Cases

As the research is concerned with multiple organisations per case, the selection for suitable candidate cases required a two-step process. The first was to identify an organisation that would potentially be involved in inter-organisational collaborations while the second was to approach the other organisations involved in the collaboration, with the aid of the first partner, and request permission to use the collaboration in the study as a unit of analysis, that is, as a case. To offer relevance to the study and a broad representation from the not-for-profit sector, cases were chosen using the list of the top ten economic contributing sub-sectors of Scotland's third-sector (SCVO, 2014).

Following the case study protocol, the researcher contacted the potential participants directly via email. A brief description of the research and the commitment required of the potential participants were included in the email along with links to the university research ethics code to assure that the research would be carried out in trustworthy manner. Once the partner decided to participate, the researcher, jointly with the partner, identified the most suitable collaborative work to use and began to make contact with the other organisations involved.

#### *3.4.1.1.1 Case 1: KSGC*

This case was the same that the researcher evaluated and detailed in Section 1.2. After the evaluation the case was approached and became both the pilot case study and case number 1.

To ensure the suitability of the case for empirical data collection the characteristics of the case were reflected upon in light of the literature reviewed in Chapter 2.
Case 1 is an example of a collaboration that formed emergently (Huxham and Vangen, 2000a; Hibbert and Huxham, 2005). There are three key participating organisations who are members of the collaboration, each with their own intra-organisational structures and agendas. The project is set in a complex organisational context; there are multiple organisations collaborating, which in turn is set in an environmental context that is a dense web of multiple stakeholders, each affecting the learning experience the organisation(s) acquires (Argote and Miron-Spektor, 2011). Initial observations of the project clearly indicated that the descriptive themes in the theory of collaborative advantage; trust, leadership, identity, fatigue etc. and the identified emerging themes of organisational learning theory are evident (Huxham and Vangen, 2005). With the end user of the project, the customer (participants in the activity), being added to the picture, there was a sufficient degree of intricacy to develop the case study design, including the case study protocol on this collaboration. There are complex definitions of performance for not-for-profit organisations, particularly in the public sector (Boyne, 2003), and in collaborative situations this complexity is increased with a presence of congruent and diverse goals (Vangen and Huxham, 2011). Alongside the research aims and objectives this very brief reflection on the extant literature was able to confirm the suitability of the characteristics of the first case in order to illuminate the theoretical constructs under scrutiny. It was used as the test case and subsequently utilised as the first of the five selected cases for empirical data collection and analysis. This shaped the case selection criteria from which the other cases were selected.

#### *3.4.1.1.2 Case 2: Grey Space*

Starting in April 2016, Case 2 is the result of a formation of a community tension monitoring group spread across two adjoining local authority areas of Scotland. The group is a multi-agency informal collaboration in both the public and third sector. These include faith groups, minority groups, statutory bodies and local authority representation. The hope for the group in setting up was that members would be able to come together to share insight into the

community they represent and create a discussion forum for internal and external factors impacting the communities of the local authority areas in question. The group seeks to involve community leaders and representatives from statutory and non-statutory bodies to react to and calm community tensions created by major 'negative' events such as incidents of terrorism or cultural phobias.

#### *3.4.1.1.3 Case 3: Give Me 5*

Starting in 2017, the 'Give Me Five' campaign is a coalition of third sector, civic society and faith groups (CPAG, 2016). Working in a collaborative manner it aims to put forward a strong case to increase social benefit in order to assist Scotland's targets to reduce child poverty by the year 2030 (BBC News). New social security powers devolved under the Scotland Bill include powers to top up reserved benefits and as there are currently 1 in 4 children in Scotland living in poverty, the project aims to support an increase in social security which they believe will enable greater access to opportunities for these children. They campaign is still live, but the group have now been acknowledged by the Scottish Government through amendments to their Child Poverty Bill 2017 into which this project fed.

#### *3.4.1.1.4 Case 4: This is Our Faith*

This is Our Faith, the syllabus for Catholic religious education in Scotland, governs the teaching of religious education in Scotland's Catholic schools. It is the first religious education syllabus to be originated wholly in Scotland and designed to meet the needs of young people in Scotland. It was published in November 2011 by the Scottish Catholic Education Service on behalf of the Catholic Bishops of Scotland (SCES, 2012).
In order to achieve the work, the Scottish Catholic Education Service (SCES) led a collaboration of stakeholders from the Roman Catholic Church, Catholic Head Teachers Association Scotland, the School of Education at the University of Glasgow and Learning and Teaching Scotland (LTS).[1]

#### *3.4.1.1.5 Case 5: Just Faith*

Just Faith was a collaborative projected involving Scottish Catholic International Aid Fund (SCIAF), Justice and Peace Scotland and Missio Scotland. They worked together to share the social justice work of the Catholic Church and to encourage members to connect their faith

[1] LTS - a Scottish Government executive agency now known as Education Scotland

with action for change (Just Faith, 2014). Although each of the three organisations involved works in Scotland with permission of the Bishops' Conference of Scotland each is run as an entirely separate entity. Each organisation operates within the third-sector and each is a registered charity in Scotland. The collaboration was inspired by Catholic social teaching with the aim to encourage more people to look at local and global needs and to act for social justice (Just Faith, 2014). Work on the collaboration began in 2013 and was concluded in 2017.

### 3.4.2 Data Collection Techniques

There are a number of options that can be used to collect data from field research when using the case study research (Figure 3:1). Yin (2003) categorises these into six distinct types which are listed in Table 3:3. Each of these has a strength and weakness that must be taken into consideration when designing the research. Further to this not all options will be available to the researcher, for example observations are not possible if the case in question is retrospective.

Interviews are extensively used in collecting data in case study research, this technique should be complimented by other techniques and the researcher should strive for triangulation in collection of data in case study research (Voss, Tsikriktsis and Frohlich, 2002). Through using more than just case study interviews for data gathering the research can be confident that the facts being collected are indeed correct (Meredith, 1998). When collaborations are informal in nature, as the situation is in this research, they are best suited to be studied through in-depth interviews in combination with one or more qualitative research methods where possible (Amirkhanyan, 2009). Data therefore is obtained through non-participant observations, archives, documentation with the main source if collection being a series of semi-structured interviews.

| Source of evidence | Strengths | Weaknesses |
|---|---|---|
| Documentation | • Stable-can be reviewed repeatedly<br>• Unobtrusive-not created as a result of the case study<br>• Exact-contains exact names, references, and details of an event<br>• Broad – can cover long time period and multiple settings | • Retrievability – locating documents<br>• Biased selectivity, if collection is incomplete<br>• Reporting bias-reflects bias of author<br>• Access-may be deliberately withheld |
| Archival Records | • Same as above for documentation<br>• Precise and quantitative | • Same as above for documentation<br>• Accessibility due to privacy reasons |
| Interviews | • Targeted-focuses directly on case study topic<br>• Insightful-provides perceived causal inferences | • Bias due to poorly constructed questions<br>• Inaccuracies due to poor recall<br>• Reflexivity-interviewee gives what interviewer wants to hear |
| Direct Observations | • Reality-covers events in real time<br>• Contextual- covers context of the case | • Time consuming<br>• Selectivity-unless broad coverage<br>• Reflexivity-event may proceed differently because it is being observed<br>• Cost-hours needed by human observers |
| Participants Observation | • Same as above for direct observations<br>• Insightful into interpersonal behaviour and motives | • Same as above for documentation<br>• Bias due to investigator's manipulation of events |
| Physical Artefacts | • Insightful into cultural features<br>• Insightful into technical operations | • Selectivity<br>• Availability |

**Table 3:3 Data Gathering Techniques**
(Adapted from Yin, 2018, p. 144)

### 3.4.2.1 Interviews

A purpose of the qualitative interview is to draw out the experiences, perceptions and feelings of the research participant, co-generating and accessing meaning through the topic of discussion (Edwards and Holland, 2013, p. 53). The interviews were designed by the case study protocol, that is, by the research's line of enquiry. This allowed them to be 'semi -

structured' in that the interviews were guided conversations focused on the themes being investigated (Yin, 2018).

The semi-structured interview is typically a list of questions or topics that the researcher wishes to ask or cover during the interview process with the interviewee in an interactional exchange of dialogue between two or more participants (Mason, 2002, p. 62). There is room for flexibility in the order of questioning, how the line of enquiry is put forward; space for the interviewee to answer in their own terms while offering enough structure for comparison across interviews (Edwards and Holland, 2013, p. 29). The semi-structured interview allows for rich qualitative data through the expression of emotions, values, beliefs and motives of the participants (Burns and Burns, 2008). Another advantage of the flexibility that interview questions provide is the opportunity it offers the researcher to follow up and explore responses from the participants (Yin, 2003). Semi- structured interviews are targeted, focusing directly on the case study topic that illicit insightful perceived causal inferences (Yin, 2003). The complexity in the structure of inter-organisational collaborations, where groupings of individuals are required to work together, representing their own individual organisations and extended stakeholders, leads the research to use these forms of data gathering to explore the individual and collective sense of meaning within the environment they operate (Cameron, 2009).

For a critical realist it is possible to reach out to capture reality and structures through the understandings and experiences of the interviewee, placing these in a dialogue with theories of what the social world is like and how it functions. This is how it is possible to have some knowledge of reality and structures that exist separately from the subject (Edwards and Holland, 2013, p. 22). Thus, while the objective structure of reality is not fully grasped, at least not in a perfect mode, it can be researched through qualitative methods such as the interview to 'uncover the manifest interactions of the social world, which are then subjected to the transcendental process of theory generation to infer the structural conditioning of the interactions .[and] to subsequently test the veracity of theories concerning the nature and effects of the structures pertaining' (Porter, 2002, p. 65).

Those opposed to the semi-structured interview tend to support the positivist paradigm where research should look to reduce both the bias of the researcher and the subjectivity of the subject (Edwards and Holland, 2013, p. 4). Bias is also a possibility if the questions are

constructed poorly, while there could be weakness in the responses given through inaccuracies due to poor recall or if the interviewee answers what the interviewer wants to hear (Yin, 2003). Other criticisms of using interviews as a data collection technique include them being unreliable due to 'sensemaking by image-conscious informants' (Eisenhardt, 2007, p. 28). There are ways to help mitigate such potential bias. This research has chosen a mixture of retrospective and real time cases. The focal events of retrospective cases are recent while the real-time cases have allowed for observations to aid triangulation of the empirical material. As previously discussed however, the ontological and epistemological stance is not concerned by unreliability of sense-making but instead embraces it; trying to explain the role that the subjects play in giving meaning to the phenomenon under research. This approach also recognises that researchers' values are inherent in all phases of the research process, and that truth is negotiated through dialogue (Edwards and Holland, 2013, p. 22).

#### 3.4.2.2 Conducting interviews

Data gathering for this research is focused on semi-structured interviews of those who have been involved in representing their not-for-profit organisation at a not-for-profit inter-organisational collaborative project. Each project is comprised of a minimum of three organisations and a minimum of one individual from three of the participating organisations is interviewed. If possible and available to study, observations and documentation is added to the data collection procedure to assist in triangulation. With regards to creating the interview questions, it is argued that a protocol should be adopted with the initial questions developed based on a review of the literature, serving to guide the overall direction of each interview and allowing for prompting of these key identified issues (Liu, Borman and Gao, 2014; Vangen, Hayes and Cornforth, 2015). When deciding on the number of respondents required for interview one of the considerations is the danger of over committing resource to the process. There is no set rule on the number of respondents but there should be enough to reduce subjectivity and bias, and any additional interviews should be done where there is a possibility of adding depth to the enquiry (Voss, Tsikriktsis and Frohlich, 2002). While it is doubtful a large number of interviews would reduce the quality of data it may only be adding bulk and increasing the workload for the researcher as large quantities of data become difficult to manage. It is therefore prudent to stop when there are enough cases and data to address the research question. While there is no definitive answer as to how many interviews should be conducted, the considerations are epistemological, methodological and practical, so the recurring answer might be 'it depends' (Baker, Edwards and Doidge, 2012). Among those

who would support the number of interviews carried out across this research include the recommendation of a sample of six for phenomenological studies (Morse, 1994) or aiming for 12 interviews which would give data saturation (Guest, Bunce and Johnson, 2006), however the advice varies greatly (Edwards and Holland, 2013). Interviews can be with a single interviewee or a group. The latter was only a consideration in the first case, where the individual participating organisations were interviewed in pairs as was their request. This was positive as it allowed for debate and was not dominated by one individual over another as there was no seniority within the pairings (Voss, Tsikriktsis and Frohlich, 2002).

#### 3.4.2.3 Other Techniques

Documentation takes many forms; minutes of meetings, internal documents, press releases, emails, newsletters, strategy documents, media articles etc. Gaining access to documents requires a high level of trust between the organisation under research and the researcher, therefore it can be expected that there is a guarding and withholding of some documentation. This is a similar situation with archival data which are not unlike documentation in their form, for example; company publications, audio/video media, databases and books, annual reports, financial reports. Through making field visits to the active case study sites, whether in meetings or at collaborative activity, the researcher has had the opportunity for some direct observations. In some cases, there have been behaviours displayed and specific environmental conditions that have added as an additional source of evidence in case studies, one advantage of having access to observations (Yin, 2003).

What follows is a very brief overview of collecting data by case. The data techniques employed, how many organisations were interviewed, how many individuals from those organisations, when and for how long the interviews took place. The case study protocol (Appendix, A) provides details of the questions asked during the semi-structured interview process.

### 3.4.2.4 Case 1: KSGC

Semi-structured interviews were carried out with the three collaborating organisations. Two of the organisations wished to be interviewed with two representatives present. The other was carried out on a one to one basis, therefore there were three interviews and five interviewees in total.

| Interviewee | Organisation | Date | Length (minutes) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2 Senior Regional Leaders | Clyde Scouts | 08 June 2017 | 68 |
| 2 Senior Local Leaders | Girl Guides Dunbartonshire | 21 June 2017 | 48 |
| Family Liaison Officer | HMP Low Moss | 13 October 2017 | 39 |

In this case it was possible to carry out observations of the project in action. Documentation available included the researcher's own evaluation report of the project.

### 3.4.2.5 Case 2: Grey Space

One to one semi-structured interviews were carried out with a representative from 3 of the collaborating organisations. There were therefore three interviews in total.

| Interviewee | Organisation | Date | Length (Minutes) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Chief Inspector | Police Scotland | 20 September 2017 | 68 |
| Church Leader | Catholic Church | 08 December 2017 | 55 |
| Community Officer | West Scotland Regional Equality Council | 17 January 2018 | 34 |

In addition to the one to one semi-structured interviews, given that this project had not reached its conclusion, it was possible to attend group meetings to see the project in action and to carry out data observations for this case study. Those in attendance were made aware that the observations were taking place for research purposes and no objections were raised by the participants.

| Observation Location | Observation Date | Observation Length (Minutes) |
|---|---|---|
| Inverclyde Council | 04 September 2017 | 90 |
| University of West of Scotland | 30 November 2017 | 90 |

#### 3.4.2.6 Case 3: Give Me 5

One to one semi-structured interviews were carried out with at least one representative from three of the collaborating organisations. There were four interviewees in total as one organisation put forward their two representatives for a joint interview.

| Interviewee | Organisation | Date | Length (Minutes) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Project Worker | CPAG | 31/01/2018 | 54 |
| Campaign Officer | Justice & Peace | 19/03/2018 | 60 |
| Co-Ordinator | Justice & Peace | 19/03/2018 | |
| Policy Worker | Poverty Alliance | 11/05/2018 | 55 |

In addition to the one to one semi-structured interviews, documentation was retrieved from the Scottish Government in relation to their Child Poverty Bill 2017 into which this project fed. Other data included social media, mainstream media and company websites, with some limited observations of individual project tasks.

#### 3.4.2.7 Case 4: This is Our Faith

One to one semi-structured interviews were carried out with a representative from each of the collaborating organisations, except for SCES, who provided two representatives that were also interviewed on a one to one basis. There were therefore six interviews in total. As this project had reached its conclusion it was not possible to carry out observations of steering group meetings or the project in action. There was however confidential access to some documentation and redacted minutes.

| Interviewee | Organisation | Date | Length (minutes) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Project Lead | SCES | 23 October 2017 | 62 |
| Project Officer | SCES | 23 October 2017 | 43 |
| Head Teacher Representative | CHTAS | 01 November 2017 | 52 |
| Catholic Church Employee | RC Church & RE Advisors | 21 November 2017 | 53 |
| University Researcher | S of E – University of Glasgow | 21 November 2017 | 39 |
| University Researcher | S of E – University of Glasgow & LTS | 21 November 2017 | 24 |

#### 3.4.2.8 Case 5: Just Faith

One to one semi-structured interviews were carried out with a representative from each of the collaborating organisations. There were therefore three interviews in total. As this project had reached its conclusion it was not possible to carry out observations of steering group

meetings or the project in action. Documentation has been made available in the form of an internal mid-project evaluation and external resources from the project website.

| Interviewee | Organisation | Date | Length (minutes) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Project Officer | Missio Scotland | 10 October 2017 | 67 |
| Project Officer | Justice & Peace Scotland | 10 October 2017 | 68 |
| Project Officer | SCIAF | 13 October 2017 | 72 |

In total the 5 cases have resulted in 18 interviews involving 21 interviewees. The total interview time was 961 minutes (16 hours).

## *3.5 Data Analysis*

Following both Saunders (2016) and Easton (2010, p. 124) both deductive and inductive cycles of data analysis were employed, which is in keeping with the critical realist paradigm and abductive research strategy discussed previously in this chapter. In case studies deduction helps to identify the phenomenon of interest, suggests what mechanism may be at play and provide links with previous research and literature. Induction provides event data to be explained and tests the explanations. Engaging in both deductive and inductive data analysis along with the relatively limited number of cases allowed the researcher to identify patterns across the examined collaborations without the need for software packages. As data is collected from people and from and about material things then the explanations that arise from it are interpretivist in nature. This is because critical realists accept that there are differences between the empirical, the actual and the real (Easton, 2010, p. 124).

### 3.5.1 Data Documenting and Coding

The collected data sets were analysed through qualitative techniques. One of the difficulties faced with qualitative research is the vast amount of data that is collected; but the benefit of this is that the data has richness (Smith and Bititci, 2017). There are three concurrent flows of activity in analysis: data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing/verification (Miles and Huberman, 1994). When gathering data ahead of its analysis this research followed the advice of Voss, Tsikriktsis and Frohlich (2002, p. 212): The necessary first step is a detailed write up of each site following the research protocol structure. Where appropriate this will involve transcription of recordings. Ideally this should be done as soon as possible after the case visit.' Having done this for each of the five cases used in this case analysis research, the

next stage was to try to reduce the data into categories (Miles and Huberman, 1994; Voss, Tsikriktsis and Frohlich, 2002). Data reduction is another way of describing the process of organising the data in such a way that proper analysis of it can begin, also allowing irrelevant pieces of the data to be discarded. It is the first step of the analysis process.

Qualitative data can be reduced and transformed in many ways, for example: through selection, through summary or paraphrase, or through being coded and subsumed in a larger pattern or category. There is the option to engage in the categorising or coding of data through computer software (for example N-Vivo) or, as was done in this research, to do this manually, using tables and matrices (Miles and Huberman, 1994). The research design used both a case study protocol and the conceptual model (Section 2.6 and Appendix A) to guide the structuring of the interview data and classification of the subsequent categories. In this project, the researcher started data reduction through writing-up a case study report. The report identifies, in one complete document, the main points from the interviews, digital recordings, field notes, observations and documentary evidence that are pertinent to the research questions, constructs and framework. The second major flow of analysis activity is data display while the third stream of analysis activity is conclusion drawing or analysis. These two parts of the activity in multi-case analysis research are tied up in processes known as ‘within case’ and ‘cross-case’ analysis (Eisenhardt, 1989; Miles and Huberman, 1994; Voss, Tsikriktsis and Frohlich, 2002; Yin, 2003).

### 3.5.2 Within Case

The two key objectives of within-case analysis are to aid the researcher. Firstly, to enable a familiarity of the individual cases and, secondly, to allow unique patterns of each case to emerge before a generalisation of patterns across all of the cases investigated (Eisenhardt, 1989). The first stage is to create a display of all the organised data that has come from the data reduction which can either be matrices of defined rows and columns, or they can be data maps (Miles and Huberman, 1994). This research has employed the former. Once there is a display of the data created, the next stage is to look for explanation and causality (Voss, Tsikriktsis and Frohlich, 2002) Following the advice of Miles and Huberman (1994), data has been displayed for describing and explaining each of the 5 cases. Doing so allows the researcher to view a full data set which has been reduced from the field data (interviews, documentation, observations, reports) and arranging it in such a wat that valid conclusions can be taken from it to answer the research question(s) of the study. This research displayed

data as a matrix, but event listings or critical incident charts are other forms in which this can be done (Miles and Huberman, 1994).

Coding the data is a technique which attaches specific codes or numbers to a segment of words. This allows for the data to be reduced into categories (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Miles and Huberman, 1994). Having coded incidents of phenomena into categories the researcher can identify patterns of data which can then lead to theoretical developments (Miles and Huberman 1994, Voss, Tsikriktsis and Frohlich, 2002). There are a few possibilities of approach in qualitative research to coding the data, including grounded theory, thematic, and discourse analysis (Bryman and Bell, 2015). In keeping with the critical realist approach of this research a 'template analysis' technique was used for this stage of the data analysis which is 'a structured technique for analysing qualitative data that enables researchers to place some order on their data from the start of the analytical process' (Thorpe and Holt, 2007, p. 221). Having gathered the data into categories, this technique allows the researcher to classify topics and explore their relationships, (Crabtree and Miller, 1999). The benefit of doing this over the other mentioned techniques is that it permits codes to be defined 'a-priori.' They are drawn out from the literature and relate to common or significant themes which characterises the topic/theory of interest. This means that in the deductive stage of analysis (Easton, 2010) the codes can be derived from the conceptual framework of the study, the research question along with any other variable deemed as significant to the research. As the analysis moves into an inductive stage the codes can be added 'a-posteriori' (King, 2004; Swan and Scarbrough, 2005), meaning that the template can be modified with either emergent new themes from the data, or an adjustment to the first codes. The 'a-priori' coding scheme in this study was based on the findings of Chapter 2 (Section 2.6). Using the original template, the data was analysed, and sections were assigned to the relevant and appropriate code. Before undertaking the assignment of codes, the data was read through on multiple occasions to ensure a familiarity and deeper understanding of the meaning coming from the narratives. Only then was an analysis of each transcript and document was done to code sections of text which could be associated to one or more of the 'a-priori' codes.

Allowing for the theoretical lens of the research to be central to the analysis of the data, the template analysis approach moves to an inductive stage. This allows for themes to emerge directly from the data and discover potential key aspects of the findings that were not covered by the original coding (Fereday and Muir-Cochrane, 2006; Easton, 2010). Doing so in this

study meant it became necessary to add the theme of 'Goals.' Furthermore, through an absence of explicit performance measures in the data this a-priori code evolved to 'organisational controls' while substantive and process learning were merged as it was difficult to distinguish between these two forms of learning in the data.

The coded data was then used to develop interrelations table matrices between performance management and measurement (organisational controls), organisational learning, and goals (within a collaboration) to highlight how they affect/manipulate each other either or any associated tension. Having coded the case study reports, interviews and other available data and mapped them onto a template of themes (matrix), key learning points from each case are identified and summarised to present the within case findings. These key learning points comprise issues that support previous literature, contradict with previous literature, extend findings of previous studies or issues that are generally not well developed by previous studies. This is further discussed in Chapter 4.

### 3.5.3 Cross Case

Cross-case analysis serves to increase the internal validity of the research findings (Voss, Tsikriktsis and Frohlich, 2002), and while there are multiple techniques for cross-case analysis (Eisenhardt, 1989; Miles and Huberman, 1994), there should be a full array of the summarised case data. This can be done by creating a large spreadsheet of the data and then to refine these into two-by-two cells (Voss, Tsikriktsis and Frohlich, 2002). Miles and Huberman (1994) identified two different strategies that are useful for cross-case analysis; case-oriented strategy and variable-oriented strategy and they support the use of both strategies to strengthen the validity of findings. Having constructed an array of the data, a simple but very effective analytical approach is to pick a group or category and search within for group similarities or differences.

In the deductive stage of analysis, the case-oriented strategy was used. This compliments a replication strategy (either theoretical or literal replication) using the conceptual framework across all the cases involved. Data analysis should rely on the theoretical propositions that led the case study in the first instance (Yin, 2003). The inductive stage of the analysis then used a variable oriented strategy to identify themes that cut across the cases. This seeks out emergent themes that are linked in some way to the different variables of the researched cases and involves asking what is similar, what is different and why (Eisenhardt, 1989; Voss,

Tsikriktsis and Frohlich, 2002). Analysing in case study is an iterative process during which overall themes, concepts and possibly relationships between variables will begin to emerge, leading towards theory that provides a close fit (Voss, Tsikriktsis and Frohlich, 2002).
The next stage of the process, when the aim is to in some way develop theory beyond simply testing extant theory, is to take the findings and discuss them in relation to the extant literature and theory in question. In addition to developing theory 'overall effective enfolding of literature increases both the quality and the validity of the findings' (Voss, Tsikriktsis and Frohlich, 2002, pp. 216-217). How validity and reliability are ensured in case study research is discussed in the next section of this chapter.

### 3.5.4 Validity and Reliability

Yin (2018) identifies four ways of ensuring that any results from case study research are both valid and reliable. These are: construct validity, internal validity, external validity and reliability (Yin, 2018). Evaluating research quality in this manner will enhance confidence in the research findings. The four tests and the recommended case-study tactics, as well as a cross reference to the phase of research when the tactic is to be used, is summarised in Table 3:4. Construct validity is of high importance in ensuring the data collected is valid, trustworthy and reliable. Internal validity enables a causal relationship to be established. External validity assists in addressing any concerns about generalising findings. In a similar role reliability allows the researcher to demonstrate that the study can be repeated with the same outcome.

| Test | Case Study Tactic | Phase of research in which tactic occurs |
|---|---|---|
| Construct Validity | Use multiple sources of evidence.<br>Have key informants review draft case study report. | Data Collection<br>Composition |
| Internal Validity | Do pattern matching or explanation building or time-series analysis | Data analysis |
| External Validity | Use replication logic in multiple case studies | Research design |
| Reliability | Use case study protocol<br>Develop case study database<br>Maintain a chain of evidence | Data Collection<br>Data Collection<br>Data Collection |

**Table 3:4 Reliability and Validity in Case Research**
(Yin, 2018, p.43)

The use of a recording device at the interviews can assist with the challenge of reducing the influence of observer bias (Voss, Tsikriktsis and Frohlich, 2002). This research employed this technique as well as transcribing the interviews verbatim. This was only a logistical impossibility for two of the interviews of Case 1 as recording devices were not permitted on site. In order to reduce the potential for bias in these instances the researcher took notes during the interview and wrote an interview summary as soon as the interview ceased.

## *3.6 Research Ethics*

Moral values and principles that form the basis of a code of conduct is what is termed research ethics. It is concerned with not only the process of collecting data but how this data is stored, reported and ultimately presented in the findings (Collis and Hussey, 2013). Thus, ethical issues in organisational research are not to be restricted simply to all fieldwork, but should be extended from the research design through to the writing up process and presentation of data and findings (Kvale, 1996). This research followed the policy of the institution under whose consent the research was undertaken. The ethical principles and brief description of these can be found in Table 3:5.

| Ethics Policy Principles | Brief Detail |
|---|---|
| Prevention of harm | Researchers must seek to protect participants from physical and psychological harm during the research process. |
| Informed consent | Informed consent helps to minimise harm to participants. Without informed consent, participants may feel manipulated, humiliated or mistreated by researchers. It is necessary to attain full participant consent unless there is a strong rationale for no or partial consent. |
| Rights of participants | In giving consent, participants retain the right to withdraw this consent |
| Minimising risk with vulnerable participants | Some participants should automatically be considered vulnerable because of a limited ability to provide consent to take part in a research project. Extra safeguards and consent procedures must be designed and followed when recruiting vulnerable participants to research projects. |
| Respect for participants | Researchers should aim to conduct research that is respectful of: national and international law, gender differences, all groups in society, and, marginalised/disadvantaged groups. |
| Confidentiality | Unless agreed otherwise, the findings from research should be communicated in a manner that protects the confidentiality of the participants. |
| Appropriate use of rewards and incentives | Incentivising participation in research projects should only be on the basis of making people want to take part. |
| Anti-discriminatory | Researchers should act in a manner that complies with the Equality Act 2010. |

Table 3:5 Heriot-Watt University Research Ethics Policy
(Heriot Watt University, 2017)

The Ethics Officer from the university reviewed the ethics application for a multi-case research design as set out in the case study protocol in July 2017. It received full approval and the principals detailed in the table above were stuck to religiously. As shown by the above 'Ethics Policy', there are a number of considerations when designing research to ensure that it is carried out in an ethical manner, the key elements of which are briefly summed up by Collis and Hussey:

> Participants must be informed of the purpose of the research, voluntary participation, the opportunity to withdraw at any time, the right to confidentiality and anonymity. In addition, researchers should be aware they do not have the right to invade a person's privacy or to abandon the respect for the value of others (Collis and Hussey, 2013, p. 32).

Participants in research should be dutifully informed of their rights as a participant and their consent to be part of the research project must be sought and granted. This means that the perspective participants should be invited to join in a completely voluntary basis, avoiding coercion and, or, reward for participating, as either can lead to bias in the findings. Full information should be given about what is required and the likely time commitment needed for participation. Anonymity and confidentiality should be offered to any participant in research. This is not something that the participants have to accept but could lead to easier access for the researcher and may also lead to more honest responses from interviewees (Collis and Hussey, 2013).

After identifying prospective cases to be used for the research, a contact at the case was established. This person was sent an email invitation to participate along with the researcher's full contact details and links to the university research ethics webpage. The invitation gave a brief overview of the study, written with the practitioner in mind, so to make abundantly clear why their collaborative project was of interest to the study. If the contact agreed to participation, they were asked to provide either direct or indirect contact details of the relevant others within the collaboration and the same process was repeated. An offer was made to meet the prospective participants in person to explain the rational of the study and to answer any queries they would have before committing to a recorded interview and access to the collaboration. By following the above protocol, the researcher was able to ensure that all individuals partaking in the study had the requisite provision and understanding of information while recognising the voluntary nature and consequences of participation (Flick, 2014). It was also made clear that any agreement to be involved did not affect their right to withdraw from the research at any given time without having to justify such a course of action. A further requirement was the application for a PVG certificate. The Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) membership scheme is managed and delivered by Disclosure Scotland and helps makes sure people who work with children and/or protected adults are suitable (Scottish Government, 2019).

## *3.7 Conclusion*

This chapter presents the methodology applied during the research project. It begins with a short overview of the underpinning research philosophy and research paradigm, clearly opting for a critical realist stance over a more traditional positivist or interpretivist paradigm. It then goes into detail about the case study research protocol that was adopted. It defines what a case

study is understood to be and why case studies were chosen rather than other research methods. The case study research design was explored before explaining the case study selection and the data collection techniques that were used. These depended on semi-structured interviews of participants of each collaboration, that is each case, observations where possible and permitted, and access to archives and documentation. The case study protocol is appended and discussed in detail. The data analysis was discussed, firstly looking at documenting and coding the data, within-case study and cross-case study analysis techniques, and a short discussion about validity and reliability of the results. Finally, the research ethics were discussed in detail and it was shown how Heriot-Watt's research protocol was followed throughout the study. Moving on to the next chapter the application of the data analysis techniques detailed above is done case by case and the findings from each case are laid out and discussed.

# 4 Empirical Material

## *4.1 Within-Case Analysis*

In this chapter the key empirical data for five case studies are laid out and discussed. As justified in Chapter 3, a matrix was used to display the data ready to engage in a template analysis to examine each case individually, arriving at within-case findings.

The template consisted of a-priori coding which stems from the literature review findings and subsequent conceptual framework and literature-based propositions. These are:

- Potential Value (Reasons for Collaborating)
- Performance Measurement and Management (PMM)
- Organisational Learning (OL):
    - Substantive
    - Process
    - Transferable and Experiential
- Salient Themes of Collaborative Advantage Theory

Having analysed the cases using these codes it became clear that there are few explicit instances of PMM systems or general performance measurement, however both technical and social organisational control types emerged from the narrative in each case. As a result, PMM as a code gives way to 'Organisational Controls.'

In addition to PMM and OL, the research was looking for the reasons for collaborating. This was to enable a clearer understanding of each case and its context but also as a way to engage the other themes of collaborative advantage theory. Of these themes 'Goals' (Section 2.3.3) emerged as the strongest, above all when noting instances of organisational control or organisational learning. Goals are thus analysed in addition to PMM (controls) and OL.

In line with expectations from the literature, substantive and process learning forms are difficult to distinguish so have been analysed as a single learning form.

The 'a-priori' codes thus evolved to:

- Potential Value (Reasons for Collaborating)
- Goals (broadly defined)
- Organisational Controls (to include PMM)
- Organisational Learning
    - Substantive and Process
    - Experiential

To be able to analyse the relationship with each other and come to findings within each case the 'a-priori' codes were paired together before finally grouping them all together, creating a set of four 'a-posteriori' codes:

- Organisational Controls and Learning
- Organisational Learning and Goals
- Organisational Controls and Goals
- Overlap of Control, Learning and Goals (All 3)

The study of each individual case was searching to understand how forms of organisational learning are facilitated in an inter-organisational collaboration, specifically through the measurement and performance of management. The within case findings of each case are summarised in Appendix C. These findings from each case are used to engage in cross case data analysis (Section 4.4).

## *4.2 Discussion of Cases*

### 4.2.1 Case 1: KSGC

This case was the same that the researcher evaluated and detailed in Sections 1.2 and 3.4.1. After the evaluation the case was approached and became both the pilot case study and case number 1.

#### 4.2.1.1 Potential Value – Reasons for Collaborating

The collaboration began quite unexpectedly with volunteers from the Guides offering to support the prison's family visit time, done so out of altruism. The prison was reaching out to volunteer groups and the Guides were open to trying new ways of working. The Guides sought support from the Scouts; firstly, as it was not in their own remit to engage with male children and, secondly, they were unable to recruit as many volunteers as they would like. Despite the three organisations being keen for some sort of program to be offered to the families affected by imprisonment, there was not an established agreed and shared raison d'etre for what became the KSGC. There was poor communication between the three key participating organisations when establishing the shared need to collaborate:

*"Girl guiding needed us on board to help deliver activities for boys and girls…then pulled together people and allowed it to go in an organic direction without any real plan and structure...we didn't have much contact with prison at the beginning, we were working through the guides…. I would have expected some contact."*

Each of the three organisations had an individual organisational reason to want to collaborate, linked to their own organisational goals however there was not a clear shared driving factor.

#### 4.2.1.2 Goals

As noted each of the three participating organisations entered into this collaboration with goals at the organisational level that made the collaboration seem worthwhile without being able to identify a strongly shared collaborative meta-goal. There was not enough flexibility or will to align goals better to nurture or strengthen the collaborative activity:

*"They have always had a disconnect but they have shown enthusiasm, we had a couple of meetings with SMT and they were always happy with it but in the same way they might be happy with a story teller. So, they did not seem to have an interest in the scouting/guiding element of it."*

Likewise, some of the explicit goals at the individual level were too disconnected from the organisational level, or at least there was not enough done to align them better. Many of the volunteers recruited for this collaboration were also new to the respective organisation and therefore were often more interested in their own goals of work experience and CV enhancement. The lack of goal nurturing led to some tension and resentment between the organisations:

*"We were not looking for any additional praise or exposure from it whereas the Scouts definitely exploited the project for PR, they were far more interested in that side of things and were quite happy to take credit for the project to gain free advertising for the movement and their current vacancies"*

This kind of tension created by not nurturing goals put a strain on the collaboration. It also naturally made understanding and measuring success challenging and they were unable to express or evidence if they were achieving collaborative advantage. There was a disconnect between the goals from an individual level, through the participating organisations to the collaborative, however, there was space to allow for this complexity of goals, giving enough value in the outputs to keep the collaboration going, which has no formal means of forcing its continuation.

#### 4.2.1.3 PMM and Organisational Control

##### *4.2.1.3.1 Performance Measurement and Management*

There was no clear performance measurement and management (PMM) system in place. One barrier to this was a shared vision of success and another in the earlier stages was establishing a lead organisation or a rotating leadership model to take responsibility.

*"...[I]t was my perception at the start that the guides would be leading this as they had started it, but it clearly wasn't. They had the original discussions, but I do not think they ever believed or saw themselves as being in charge or in the lead as such."*

One of the partners then funded an employee to lead the club but there was a challenge in translating internal performance measurement procedures into the collaboration, such as attendance of participants, training of volunteers and the number of badges achieved by participants of the activities. The environment was completely different, adhering to the rules and regulations of holding activities within an adult prison and the control over the collaboration was informally shared. The key reason for not creating a satisfactory measurement system seems to be that they *"never got to grips with what good scouting or good guiding at [the prison] might look like other than anecdotally,"* thus they were unable to set how or what to measure to keep all the key stakeholders satisfied, even at an individual organisational level.

One of the highlighted tensions is trying to ensure there are valuable outputs at either the collaborative or organisational level versus the need for altruistic achievements that have a less tangible value:

*"I am not sure we could measure our parameters of what is worthwhile…You would have to decide somewhere in that the balance lies from altruism and would you bring it to a halt if the criteria were not being met?"*

The Guides were resisting formal measurement and were in favour of keeping measurements vague, taking an altruistic approach, and measuring success in anecdotal stories of positive experiences of the end user. The belief is that "*tracking performance would not be necessary unless searching for funding, which we weren't."*

It was evident therefore that a tension existed between applying more objective measures based on either or both of the organisational and the collaborative objectives and the looser subjective measurement system which favours focusing on more tacit altruistic outputs.

The external evaluation that was carried out was the first formal measurement of the outputs of the collaboration and there had been no ongoing critical reflection. The evaluation began to address some of the inertia that had crept into the collaboration. Pro-actively trying to learn from it, one of the organisations had to re-assess their organisational goals and consider a

focus on the collaborative, claiming they would now encourage small scale but more regular reporting about activity.

#### *4.2.1.3.2 Social Controls*

With the above barriers to a collaborative PMM system, the organisational controls have been socially loose and technically of low maturity. Positively this has allowed for a relaxed environment which has enabled an enhancement of relationship with the between the individuals collaborating:

*"We have a 'coffee time' approach to our discussions and our relationship with the members of the scouts was enhanced because of that."*

This type of communication and face to face meetings tailed off as the collaboration progressed, resulting in groups not knowing how each other were performing, or unable to share best practice or raise concerns:

*"Communication has always been an issue, the logistics and timings of meetings. When it has been good you really notice the positive difference."*

There was an expressed desire for more nurturing of the collaborative social controls than what was occurring:

"…*would have made it clearer who was responsible for what, where responsibility of management sat as opposed to everybody just kind of doing their own bit"*

The instinct and default position of the charitable organisations involved is to place their trust on loose social controls, however, this coupled with low maturity of the technical controls resulted in misplaced trust:

*"I am not chucking blame anywhere, but one individual who was lying or bullshitting through the process, and the first law of scouting is that a scout is to be trusted."*

Losing control of the collaboration in these moments acted as a barrier to organisational learning opportunities and relationship building. Although there was support for a relaxed and loose attitude the collaboration has at times perhaps suffered by not engaging, not necessarily in tight, but tighter social controls.

The case highlights the challenge that organisations have when trying to translate internal performance measurements into the collaborative and how to best control a collaboration of multiple stakeholders. The organisations involved have procedures in place to reflect on their internal experiences and performances but failed to nurture the need for one at the collaboration, and ultimately there was no ongoing critical reflection.

### 4.2.1.4 Organisational Learning

#### *4.2.1.4.1 Process Learning (Local collaborative) & Substantive Learning (Knowledge Creation and Transfer)*

Process learning has taken place through trial and error which seems to have suited this group but in doing do changes have been slow to implement and issues are not highlighted or dealt with at the earliest possible moments. *"The timings of the sessions, the groups, team rotas and how we built the program all developed through trial and error and we have a way that seems to work and has worked well for a couple of years now."*

This ad-hoc process learning meant issues were only addressed when they became explicit barriers to progress. The evaluation report was able to offer new insights and to formalise other things they "*thought they already knew*." Opportunity for virtuous process learning did occur through the report but by that time it was too late to capture or exploit some of those opportunities from the learning outputs:

*"The newbies enthusiasm was welcome; our evaluation report highlighted that there was an extreme in experience among the volunteers from both groups."*

The groups carrying out the activity of the collaboration had a balanced mix of experienced and new volunteers which should and possibly did lead to substantive and process learning opportunities, but there was a lack of recording or attempting to exploit these learning opportunities or to overcome the barriers to learning. As the following quote highlights though, that unless the learning attitudes are nurtured and there is an opening up to substantive and process learning, then there is an opportunity missed, which, in this case, had a negative consequence on relationship building among the volunteers:

*"Longer standing members can get upset with newer volunteers that might suggest that something gets done a different way…"*

There were set volunteer groups formed, that worked to a four-weekly rota. Although a quick fix to suit the needs of the volunteers at the time, it was not reviewed and led to the organisations generally working in isolation. There were challenges in building relationships away from the collaboration, which acted as a barrier to mixed working, thus there was a lack of social engagement across the collaborators:

*"At the start the program was all muddled as were the people, we did not have set teams for example and we found that didn't work so we changed that. We did have some scouters originally, but we found that mixed teams didn't work as well because we didn't have the same chemistry or didn't know each other outside of the sessions, so fixed teams worked better."*

This closed some of the opportunity for substantive learning. Organisational learning needs to go through an opening-up process which requires trust and the vulnerability associated with trust building, thus by not nurturing the relationships and social aspects of the collaboration the result was reducing the exploratory learning opportunity.

In contrary to this type of behaviour the sharing and teaching of IT resources is evidence of how the attitude, being open to exchange of knowledge and resource, can yield benefits of relationship, trust and improved processes within the collaboration:

*"They introduced IT to the group… we were reluctant to do it this way, but they were quite insistent, and they were right."*

The collaboration was guilty of not addressing issues at the time of occurrence; there was a lack of process learning being facilitated and the collaboration drifted, with minor issues being buried. This affected learning attitudes, which were not conducive to shared learning and there was a lack of measurement or review to test any learning that did occur. After the evaluation there was a change in attitude from one organisation, putting actions in place to learn from the experience. They were no longer willing to let the collaboration *"muddle along"* and expressed they now realise the importance of learning.

#### *4.2.1.4.2 Experiential Learning:*

In general, when questioned about experiential learning, learning from the collaboration for the purposes of the individual organisation, it was clear that the participants felt there was value and knowledge worth transferring back. There was not any evidence of attempting to capture the learning opportunities from the collaboration until the Scouts commissioned an evaluation of the collaboration, primarily for their own internal purposes. From the completion of that evaluation, attempts have been made to disseminate the experiential learning through their own organisation and the experience gained is going into the decision-making process for future internal and collaborative projects. They are encountering, however, internal barriers to embedding this learning which raises questions of their absorptive capacity.

Similarly, for another organisation, there is a perception that the knowledge and experience gained from the collaboration would be of value at the organisational level. Those working on the collaboration try to feed and share their experiences but likewise they are encountering barriers to transferring this knowledge, citing a lack of a dissemination process: "*We do get*

*full support from the wider network but there is no succession plan in place, we have offered to share our experiences internally, but this has not really happened."*

Much like with process and substantive learning there are opportunities for experiential learning, but a lack of pro-active learning activity is proving to be a barrier. For example, it is lamented that *"[t]here also has been a high turnover of volunteers and that has had a negative impact."* This should be expected in an informal voluntary collaborative environment, however there was not a way of recording or capturing the experience of the volunteers and they were allowed to leave, taking their knowledge and experience with them. Not being able to store such learning or engage in exploitative learning behaviours at the collaborative level points to possible missed experiential and other organisational learning opportunities regardless of the barriers of transfer and dissemination that exist at the organisational level.

#### 4.2.1.5 Organisational Controls and Learning

There was some attempt to structure the volunteer groups to allow for performance gauging. The collaborators could not transfer an organisational performance measurement system into the collaboration so there was no purposful link to learning or this issue became a barrier to learning in itself: *"There was an attempt at structuring things. There was the non-badge badge scheme. When that was developing I had more positive thoughts about how it was going as began to look like more standard scouting and guiding. We didn't want it to be exactly standard but to look like it. Once we were having weeks when volunteers were not there that is when alarm bells were ringing."*

Losing control of the collaboration in these moments acted as a barrier to organisational learning opportunities and relationship building. The lack of attention to nurturing communication and the relationship led to a barrier in both performance and organisational learning. Having a barrier to implementing any sort of joint performance subsequently created a barrier to collaborative process learning:

*"There does seem to be less communication just now. Previously there was more face to face meetings, using the facilities offered by the prison but it is very difficult now to know how the other group sessions are going and how the other volunteers are doing. [They] do not feel they know all the other volunteers."*

Only one of the organisations were eventually keen on creating some sort of performance review through the evaluation which, as would be expected, highlighted areas of some of the learning that was occurring, and opportunities missed. Its recommendations offered an

opportunity to exploit some of the general learning created within the collaboration. The Guide's goals were vaguer and more altruistic, and the prison were only interested in a weekly activity taking place, content with a distant relationship with the collaboration. This lack of agreed or shared collaborative goal acted as another barrier to organisational learning and a shared PMM system.

#### 4.2.1.6 Organisational Learning and Goals

Even with the tensions created through the lack of goal alignment across the levels, the Scouts were open to learning, informally at least, and open to emerging goals, with a sense that the collaboration should be "*organic."* Ultimately though, these emerging goals were not controlled or recorded (nurtured) enough and therefore exploiting and exploratory learning behaviours and opportunities were missed:

*"I think that is almost indicative of the organic way things developed, instead of sitting down and making a plan at the start as a more traditional way of developing a model of project is right I am going to do this you are going to do this and you are going to do this and we all have a proportioned role in delivering the service."*

The attitude of being open to new goals, the emerging process, facilitated new experiential learning which in turn motivated the Scouts' continued participation and was thus feeding into maintaining a perceived value that existed:

*"The organic way of growth took us somewhere we would not have put on our radar but in hindsight and moving forward if someone was to come and say I think we should go there I would say let's take some time to put some structure and planning in place round about it."*

Without agreed goals there is a goal tension, which in turn is creating a tension on learning form and attitudes. How to use learning is not a shared aim and objective:

*"We have not had the same notion of expansion as the Scouts have had, we haven't been actively looking to roll this out to other areas or to duplicate it elsewhere."*

However, the stance of allowing the collaboration to accommodate individual organisational goals, including learning goals, has fed the perceived value of the collaboration, keeping it away from any fatal lapses of collaborative inertia.

#### 4.2.1.7 Organisational Controls and Goals.

Further to the previous discussion of barriers to implementing a shared PMM system are any hidden goals or undeclared agenda. This would not be a barrier to measure the collaborative outputs at an organisational level, but it is one at the collaborative.

*"…we wanted to bring it back to Scouting and try the 'trojan horse' model.... So, the Guides are very much in the background, I just sometimes poach Guide leaders and try turn them into Scouts!"*

This tension among the goals without having the agreement of collaborative goals in turn brought tensions how to monitor and control the collaboration. With little appetite to engage in a shared goal there is a resistance to the desire from one of the partner organisations to tighten the social controls or to bring in more mature technical measures. For example, some attempts to offer a training program for the new volunteers were made but participation in training, beyond the legal requirement of working with vulnerable groups, was never enforced.

#### 4.2.1.8 Overlap of Controls, Learning and Goals

The goals for the participating organisations were different but interdependent. On one side of this tension it has made implementing a shared PMM system challenging and thus opportunities for organisational learning seem to have been missed. Nurturing these tensions could facilitate an opportunity to make the collaboration an improved function for the multiple stakeholders concerned. The other side of this is that by being so open to facilitating the individual goals of the participating organisations and the individual participants, the majority of whom are volunteers, the collaboration is maintaining a perception of value for the collaborators. It is therefore able to continue, while staving off complete inertia. The data suggests that tightening some of the controls could have encouraged more exploitative process learning opportunities and encouraged greater goal congruence:

"…*would have made it clearer who was responsible for what, where responsibility of management sat as opposed to everybody just kind of doing their own bit and we could have thrashed out some objectives around what does good look like?... Would it have changed where we are just now?"*

There was some expression of desire for more control, with too much trust placed on loose social controls. Tightening at points could have led to further learning and goal setting opportunities and balancing the tensions between the three may have led to a more fruitful collaboration.

The case highlights the tensions that exist between organisational control, organisational learning and goals within collaborations. Loose controls, an emerging process and trying to learn as you go versus more objective goals, tighter controls, measurables and ways to exploit

learning outputs. Both extremes have their place and the key may be to recognise when they are occurring:

*"We have a project for an ethnic and religious minority group – there is a feeling among some that is should just be started and let to go organically but I am now very conscious that that is not always the best way to do it, so it will inform that decision making in the not too distant future in actual fact."*

The goals of the collaborators at the organisational and individual level were not aligned but they were compatible. More time or effort taken to try and tease these out to create an established collaborative goal that the group could rally around would have created a greater culture of organisational learning. Having such a culture would allow for management and intervention of organisational controls and a balance of tensions. This collaboration has therefore, almost paradoxically, maintained a balance of the tensions; with everything being very open and loose, maintaining enough potential value without knowing how much of it was being fulfilled to call it a collaborative advantage.

### 4.2.2 Case 2: Grey Space

The background of this Case can be read in Section 3.4.1.1.2

#### 4.2.2.1 Potential Value – Reasons for Collaborating

The collaboration was created by a regional police force who identified a need to create a community cohesion project across a region in the west of Scotland:

*"I came up with the idea of the Grey Space group and I had pitched it to all the individuals I had met over the previous months, they all thought it sounded a bit flakey, but I managed to use my inter-personal skills to persuade them all to come together to talk about this concept of community cohesion."*

It was desirable to invite as many statutory and non-statutory bodies as might be needed to participate that would adequately represent all stakeholders and constituents in the region. Those identified had knowledge of the community and were called on for their expertise and networks.

For organisation B the potential value in the project was created by having a shared belief in the reason for starting the collaboration. The opportunity to learn was viewed as both an individual and organisational goal, along with networking and relationship building. This was shared by the aims of the collaboration and therefore it was a good fit:

*"I didn't think that this was something as auxiliary or supplementary to [us], but integral to it…So I thought that is an interesting and useful way for going about this but for me it also*

*had just as a significant flip side to it…it provides a convenient forum for every civic leader in society to get to know each other personally and to build relationships and so there was sharing of information but there is also forming of relationships."*

Similarly, for organisation C, the potential value was in having similar organisational goals, along with recognising that there was the opportunity for both substantive learning and networking:

*"…an opportunity not only networking but in terms of possibly understanding some of the issues that are a potential friction between authorities and ethnic minority communities… He was talking about [it] being about an opportunity to try and stop problems before the happen and for me that seemed to be worthwhile."*

With a meta-goal that could be described as the vague aim of 'enhancing community cohesion', achieving buy-in from other organisations was challenging. Those invited needed convincing of the collaborative purpose to allow for enough of a goal alignment between their own organisation and the collaboration to invest resource. Not all invited organisations were convinced, thus they chose not to participate:

*"We had some that would not participate. They didn't think it was for them. Not the non-statutory groups though; all third sector organisations that we have approached have participated, the partner that I found difficult to get on board...was not interested, I could not persuade them it was something for them. I was quite surprised at that because I could persuade everybody else, but I just accepted that at the end of the day."*

The potential and motivation for engaging in the collaboration in this case was a convincing enough case for the collaborative need, the meta-goal, which although "*flakey*" was identified. Those organisations who agreed to participate were able to align this with their own organisational and personal goals and were also motivated by the possibility to achieve other outputs from the collaboration, in this case learning opportunities and networking.

#### 4.2.2.2 Goals

At the time of researching this case, the meta-goals of improved community cohesion and being ready to respond to a major incident in the community were still to be realised. One curiosity about this case is that the latter of those two collaborative goals is one that the group hope they never have to put into practice and in a sense hope it is only realised in preparation and not in practice.

As highlighted in the reasons for collaborating, alongside an alignment of the organisational and collaborative goals, the individual goals were a motivating factor:

*"Oh aye [it's resource intensive], but that is of me, I am making that decision...This will sound 'wanky' – social entrepreneurship is what I would describe this as – seeing a problem and applying a sort of flair and initiative to the problem. Organisations are terrible at telling people how to do things, and being prescriptive in how they do them, I think it should be flipped on its head and say we would like this to happen and you crack on."*

This shared individual belief allows the individual to see value in the collaboration for themselves and not simply for the organisation they represent:

*"I think part of it as bishop and as me, I see the importance of it personally and as the bishop. I don't think every bishop would see it as useful as I see it first of all, so I don't think in other dioceses a bishop would have sent himself, I don't think they would have seen how worthwhile it is to be committed to it."*

Although the individual and organisational goal of developing multiple relationships has not been achieved by organisation B, they are still motivated as they see that the collaboration is developing and the opportunity to do so will arise. They have already made some connections; thus, these micro-goals are being nurtured. The relationships that have developed are growing into other contexts, and these emerging organisational goals are giving perceived value to participating in the collaboration:

*"…it would take that length of time to form good relationships, a good understanding of what we all do and a good base to find things to work together, to work to creating a culture…. It does exist in bits and bobs, so at the meeting I discovered a representative of the Polish community…So you could see the potential…that there is the possibility for us developing into a culture of, it is not there yet but there is no reason why it couldn't happen."*

The case does recognise that there are likely to be multiple goals and motivations for being part of this collaboration. The perceived 'lead' organisation has an explicit agenda, but the group is formed to cater for goals of stakeholders, that is, the organisational needs and goals as well as collaborative. The collaboration is quite fluid in its direction:

*"It is obvious the police have an agenda but as communities we can take that on board and take it as an opportunity to deal with certain issues as well, so I wouldn't say it is entirely police lead, it is formed in a way all stakeholders can use it for their benefit of communities."*

That said, some already feel that the collaboration "*needs resilience to continue*" and therefore it might be argued that there is a need for short term micro goals and ways to evidence those:

*"I think it needs resilience to continue. The more it continues the more we would meet and the more a culture would be created, the more useful it would be…… That, I think, would be a matter of time and I say it is still fledging, it is worth pursuing in order for that to happen."*
The participating organisations recognise that it takes time to build a culture and the number of desired relationships. Organisations often choose to collaborate for reasons besides that of any shared collaborative goal and this is seen in this case too. Moving towards a form of collaborative advantage, realising the meta-goal, may need to be a slower process than the creating organisation would like. The data in this case suggests through nurturing some of the micro-level goals, regardless of their nature, motivates continued participation; managing and nurturing the 'tangled-web' of goals becomes part of maintaining the potential collaborative value and resisting collaborative inertia.

### 4.2.2.3 PMM and Organisational Control

#### *4.2.2.3.1 Performance Measurement and Management*

With little evidence of formal or technically mature performance measurement, the value of the outputs of the collaboration in this case is left to the perception of those participating. Members are continuing to partake in the group which is evidence that something is working or valuable within the collaboration but, as evidenced in the following interview quotes, there is no formalisation of what this is:

*"…but they wouldn't feel as keenly as something as would be directly useful to them."*

*"The only way for me [to measure the performance of the group] is consistency of people who are coming and more people coming on board...they feel you know that it is worthwhile."*

Some of the resistance to formal measurement is a fear that it could, instead of enhancing the collaboration, act as a barrier to progress; this has formed a tension between allowing the collaboration to grow organically and knowing if it is producing the desired outcomes and learning how it can be improved, suggesting a balance may be needed:

*"I would be loathed to introduce some sort of quantitative, KPI, I just do not think it is realistic. I have seen you know these numbers, give it a rating from 1 to 10 and stuff like that, it is so subjective."*

Corroborating what has been captured in the interviews *"The group has been and continues to be successful"* it has been observed that 'success' is driving the collaboration but is so far only perceptual.

#### *4.2.2.3.2 Organisational Controls*

The social controls and the low technical measures, if they can be described as that, result in this subjective perception of success. The effective lead organisation tries to resist having overly tight social controls to reduce the risk of damaging the relationship building process:

*"There are folk that never trapped...I will never cast that up to them"*

How the collaboration is controlled has to date been quite deliberate but, as witnessed through non-participatory observations of the group, it has not been brought out into the agenda to discuss, which is allowing it to begin to drift and threatens collaborative inertia.

### 4.2.2.4 Organisational Learning

#### *4.2.2.4.1 Process Learning (Local collaborative) & Substantive Learning (Knowledge Creation and Transfer)*

One of the key purposes of the group is to share and create knowledge so learning should be embedded in the actions of the group. Creating the environment for facilitating this learning is through safe open discussion and exchange of information:

*"One thing I particularly like is how we talk about things that are not normally discussed, the elephant in the room, things that are normally swept under the carpet."*

The first chairperson and organiser of the collaboration was able to get the group to 'open-up' to facilitate discussion as a way of learning, to encourage knowledge exchange and creation among the group as opposed to it just being a giving of information from only one or two participants:

*"…it was very much [us] telling them things, rather than getting interaction. So, I started using social hand grenades… as a provocateur for discussion. And god did they work, some of them have been really good and got them talking…and I think that establishes greater trust."*

This learning environment has further been created through quite literally engaging in an opening up process of opening the doors to participating organisation venues through rotating hosting venues, offering the participants substantive and experiential learning opportunities:

*"What has been useful is to have the meetings around in situ of the organisations involved, a good experience to go to the context of another organisation and to take in..."*

Similarly, instances of process learning have occurred through the open discussion and community reporting activity within the group. There exists a non-formalised way of gauging need for change through feedback at group meetings:

*"Discussion in the group, things they have asked for, that's all. Not wearing the uniform, things like that have come up, that was even a jokey thing, but we didn't take it jokey, we thought it was a good point."*

Beyond this, however, there is little evidence of exploitative behaviours in the group, likely due to the relaxed way the sessions are constructed at this stage to, among other reasons, build trust and rapport. There is an assumption that what is being learned is positive and being exploited:

*"[The changes are] all positive. They seem to like what we are doing and given the way the group is they would tell us, or I would like to think they would."*

There is therefore evidence of how substantive and process learning occurs in this case, at least in the explorative behaviours of the group and furthermore how this learning interplays with some of the other themes present in the process towards achieving a collaborative advantage. The way learning has occurred has for example assisted in relationship building through an open and relaxed attitude to how the group operates and is offering, at the very least, some tacit value to participating.

#### *4.2.2.4.2 Experiential Learning:*

The exploitative will or capability of the individual collaborating organisation appears to determine the level of experiential learning that occurs in this case. Barriers to knowledge transfer are highlighted alongside barriers to exploiting any knowledge that does get transferred. This case has three different levels of experiential learning; firstly, where there is a pro-active dissemination process which allows for experiential learning, secondly where there is a will to disseminate and exploit the learning but there are barriers in the way and lastly, where there is no dissemination and not much will to engage in the exploitative behaviours at the organisational level

In the first level, Organisation C show examples of experiential learning through a proper dissemination process at organisational level. It is a small organisation, so this perhaps reduces the barriers to experiential learning:

*"...the way we work is that every Monday we have got a staff meeting where people feedback about what they have been doing and where and see if others have questions and maybe we adopt good models of practice that we share..."*

Value is perceived from this experiential level as there is a belief that the organisation is more collaborative 'ready' having learned from this collaborative experience:

*"...purely because of the knowledge – I wouldn't see me getting that knowledge in any of the other collaborations that we have done. But on the other hand, the knowledge actually does help when we are working with other groups."*

Secondly, experiential learning can transfer back with the participating individuals, however, there needs to be a will within the organisation to exploit and disseminate this learning. In this case there is a belief that some learning is getting back to the organisation, but it will only be through time that it will make significant change within the organisation:

*"In terms of the organisation we are feeding into our reporting structures that we are doing this and that it is a good thing, and what is happening from it. So that will eventually cascade."*

Finally, a lack of engaging any dissemination process is a barrier to experiential or substantive learning being transferred back into the organisation beyond the individual representative.

*"I have knowledge of [the case] but no one else [in the organisation] has, they have no particular understanding of it."*

Any evidence of experiential learning through the collaboration is a process which relies on the dissemination capabilities of each of the participating organisations. It is only shown to be a component of a perceived collaborative advantage if the individual participant is given the mechanism to transfer that knowledge back into the organisation through exploitative behaviours of dissemination. What the other barriers are to this knowledge transfer is beyond the scope of this research.

#### 4.2.2.5 Organisational Controls and Learning

Organisational and individual learning is feeding into perception of the collaboration performing well and creating value for the collaborators. These outputs are satisfying the goals of the participant in this example, so is keeping the participant motivated:

"*...but because of [this] I think hang on is that not worth taking back so even my way of doing things is changing and it is due to the interaction with [this]."*

What was observed is a resistance in the collaboration to performance measurement, scepticism among some participants and trust has not been fully established. This resistance to a review process or an evaluation comes with a consequence of missed organisational learning opportunities:

*"we are doing an academic evaluation just now, that will ultimately report…it was always intended we would do some form of evaluation down the line… [but] that doesn't exist yet."*

As alluded to in the previous section the social controls witnessed encourage the 'opening-up' process of learning, fostering a safe environment in which to speak. The collaborators are trying to sit back and see what emerges:

*"we need to make sure they feel safe in what they are saying…to tell the truth from their perspective, we do not want what they think we want to hear."*

Thus, members are free to intervene and say they do not like something. This coupled with the fact that people are coming back and continue to participate is a sign of things going well, but, even if this can be classed as learning through the social controls, there is a gap in the collective knowledge to distinguish what of it has been virtuous:

*"They seem to like what we are doing and given the way the group is they would tell us, or I would like to think they would."*

There is further evidence from the data that the social controls within the collaboration is facilitating knowledge transfer, substantive learning but similarly the group have not employed measurements to capture or to know how this knowledge transfer is being used or, indeed, what impact it is having:

*"Appreciate what each other is trying to do for the common good… I do not think it is possible to stay too narrowly focused on what is the rational…I think it is broadly enough, the way that [they] have defined this…yes let's try point out any particular tensions...use it as a forum to work together, which of itself will bear down on tensions."*

While the current application of organisational controls is facilitating a type of organisational learning, facilitates relationship building and keeping participants motivated, there are learning opportunities not being realised, it is simultaneously acting as a barrier to exploiting the learning; for example, the group is unaware of how and if the knowledge is being disseminated through the organisations and networks. The initiator of the collaboration is trying to resist imposing tighter social controls, but this is perhaps a barrier to the feedback process:

*"…it would be very difficult to try and tell other organisations how they should disseminate these discussions and information. It would be "wanky" for us to make some stipulation around that, it needs to be organic…. we cannot tell them what to do, I understand that."*

On the other hand, within the collaboration they are looking to the leaders to instigate tighter social controls and the introduction of more mature technical ones, even if only temporarily. Organisation C laments these missed process learning opportunities to date:

*"So far it is working but I believe there is a certain point we will sit down and review and say what can we change how do we take this forward? Up until then people probably will see a*

*different angle working in the group…it would be good to see if the communities have issues they would want to be part and parcel of the group agenda."*

Such a stance has resulted in the participants being unable to formalise what successful outputs are or to really crystallise or exploit the subsequent learning outputs. To the contrary, it seems to be allowing for exploratory behaviours and relationship building, which are assisting the group positively in its pursuit of a collaborative advantage.

#### 4.2.2.6 Organisational Learning and Goals

As evidenced in the previous section this case has a vision and a goal that will take time to realise. In this informal and voluntary arrangement those participating need a reason to come, there is evidence that they need to be motivated. One motivating tool of participation is through facilitating knowledge transfer:

*"…they are volunteers …. they don't get any money as far as I am aware and the turnover there has been pretty constant - but they want to help, and they want to take part…I don't think it matters who goes as long as we get someone who speaks and is prepared to offer an opinion and prepared to have that opinion challenged, in a friendly way, and discussion to take place, but also prepared to tell the truth about what is going on."*

With the possibility to learn and reach goals the individual organisation is keen to pursue with the collaboration it is motivating the participants. Realising micro goals linked to learning motivates continued participation, for example the experiential learning outputs put into practice at the organisational level. Knowledge acquisition allows the creation of emerging goals at the organisational and individual level, feeding a need and want for the collaboration:

*"For me personally, the things I am beginning to see when I am out in the community, just the way I look at things, because of the knowledge, because of my experience, is a bit different…so I suppose it is worth being there…I am inputting in meetings, in our work, there are certain things we see as growing our projects as well, or ideas we can implement in our project."*

Further to this the networking opportunities, general learning and emerging goals in smaller sub projects with partners is helping to keep it going*:*

*"So now we are…building up relationships with communities…I have put them in touch with each other and said crack on."*

Therefore, facilitating and allowing for emerging goals and learning opportunities that occur as an output of the collaboration, a bi-product or subsidiary that involves breaking off and working with other partners is of value and a motivation to continue participation.

#### 4.2.2.7 Overlap of Controls, Learning and Goals

The project is explorative in nature and is trying not to allow itself to be restricted by a specific target. There are emerging issues that are brought to light in the meetings, these are not set but there is an overarching goal that binds the collaboration.

*"It is about looking at the possible tension or checking the temperature of the community and seeing if there are any possible issues that maybe might come out of minority ethnic communities, getting in touch with other groups and trying to curb that."*

At the current stage of the collaboration the attempts to avoid overly tight social controls, openness to learning, balanced with the openness to emerging goals is motivating the participation:

*"I think, for me, that is enough of a vague rational, general rational rather than vague, for me to continue to see how this is useful for me to continue to go along to."*

The perceived 'lead' organisation has an explicit agenda, but the group is trying to cater for goals of stakeholders, that is, the organisational needs and goals, so it is quite fluid in its direction. It is wanting to learn and improve but is lacking an ability to measure and exploit the learning opportunities. What has been observed and what is evident through the interviews is the challenge of keeping the myriad of stakeholders motivated by this collaboration with their different aims and ends, the collaboration is lacking in explicit micro-goals and measurements to facilitate and capture all the learning opportunities, it perhaps needs to mature to that stage.

With such long-term ambitions (*"For me it would need to keep going for 5-10 years that is the kind of time to make it work")* and a meta-goal they do not want to put into practice beyond mock exercises, the challenge is to keep the collaboration going in the meantime; agreeing some shorter term ambitions, micro-goals and small wins, nurturing trust among participants. When the social controls have been loosened, it has facilitated exploratory learning behaviours, given space to the 'tangled web' of goals and assisted in relationship building. The consequence, however, of not developing some way of measuring what is working, through an evaluation for example, is being able to exploit learning or recognise virtuous learning. The observations suggest that some temporary tightening of social controls

or technical measure could test the virtuosity of the organisational learning and focus the participants on the meta-goal.

Major events continue to happen in the UK that disrupt community cohesion which this group could react to if they occurred locally. The group therefore are always open to new and emerging goals, learning substantively from the environment around them. The purpose and perceived success of the group is in its fluidity, its democracy and its openness. This however is open to threats of drift an ultimately inertia.

*"there has to be a point where [we] are not driving this – to go back to the wanky phrase from earlier it needs to be organic, it has to be that it just exists – I hope that is not in some prescriptive way."*

What the collaboration needs to know about its effectiveness, the way it is working and the knowledge it is creating might be facilitated through a measurement process; creating virtuous process learning and perhaps tease out assumed, hidden and emerging goals from the participants. It is surviving for now but through the stages of the collaboration the purpose and value needs to be visited:

*"...confidence measures through tailored questions is a good way to go…. the thing for the members to evaluate is, is it a worthwhile use of their time? Do they get something from it?"*

### 4.2.3 Case 3: Give Me 5

The background of this Case can be read in Section 3.4.1.1.3

#### 4.2.3.1 Potential Value - Reasons for Collaborating

The lead organisation wanted to collaborate as they believed they would have more chance in succeeding through strength in combined resource. The invitation was to organisations who had a shared belief in tackling issue of poverty, either locally or nationally, it was then a question of did the organisation see it strongly enough aligned with their own strategy to afford the resource it would require:

*"...you have great strength when you have more organisations all backing the same thing…one of the strengths is we have a very diverse range of supporters."*

Those that did choose to collaborate did so thanks in part to organisational and collaborative congruence. Many of the collaborators are from the third-sector so what aided the potential was a commonality, not only on the proposed outcome, but with the altruistic belief system:

*"The project really falls in line with our goals, they (lead partner) align largely with what we believe as well."*

This was further enhanced by the recognition that there was strength in brining resources together:

"*…it adds legitimacy to it, that these other ones are not simply anti-poverty organisations."*

Those who were invited to participate had a valuable resource to contribute to the collaboration: *"We brought in influential people through our contacts, pre-established links that were trusted."*

Choosing to engage in the collaboration was not just reliant on an alignment with the proposed collaborative goal. This was a quid pro quo attitude, there were goals at the organisational level that could fit with this collaborative opportunity:

*"…we were committed to the child poverty issue, but we also wanted to, we needed something that would give us a platform to say [who] we are."*

Looking out for collaborative opportunities is thought of as a respected strategy within the third-sector and there is a perception that *"organisations that do not do that collaborative work are not as well respected or liked in the sector."*

The potential collaborative value in this case was deemed strong enough to engage in due to a shared belief in the collaborative goal, opportunity for value at the organisational level and the recognition for need of the resources of the participants.

#### 4.2.3.2 Goals

The lead and founding organisation had a very clear idea of what they saw as the collaborative goal:

"*It is a very well framed campaign, solutions focused, it is very visual with the high five, it is very good in that respect."*

There is a value and importance expressed in the congruence between organisational and collaborative goals, which in this case was made easier by having a very clear aim at the collaborative level:

*"…it is always young people who suffer the most. So straight away, yeah there was an obvious fit, an obvious benefit, and a very simple proposal."*

As shown in the original reasons for collaborating there was worth attributed to participation by those who were gaining additional benefit for their own organisations:

*"…it falls in with the way we are trying to work with regards to finding these unlikely allies."*

The collaborative goal aligning so strongly with the organisational goals has given the collaboration strength to resist threats of inertia:

*"I think so, they have got their faith-based reasons for why they think talking poverty is important or they have their organisational core purpose, if they are more secular background, so I think that has helped a lot."*

This case shows if the collaboration drops down the individual organisational priority there is a threat of inertia. It was challenging to encourage all organisations to keep it as a priority. Even if the collaborative goal does not have time pressures there is perhaps finite time to get the job done at an organisational level:

"*Now there are so many competing priorities, I can't give as much time as I would like to give it."*

One of the cited reasons for the group working well together was the professionalism of the individuals who share a determination to make a success of the collaboration. Such attitudes support the value of goal congruence across organisations and levels. Changes in personnel of that membership though can have a negative impact and brings a threat of inertia:

"*…ultimately it comes down to what individuals are on that group. This is quite similar in that [she] was amazing, really committed, and she made a real difference with this because she was who she was, [the replacement] is a different type of person, maybe she won't see it as such a priority."*

The congruence that exists from the collaboration through to the individual goal level, is married with a shared altruistic and personal belief system, which was evident among those interviewed that they on a personal level truly believed in the cause the were campaigning for: *"For me it is intrinsic, everything we do I think, personally, I agree with."*

Also evident in this case is a goal complexity at the individual level. Not all personal goals are congruent. The interviewee alludes to personal opportunities that fuel their own motivation to participate:

*"I am strategic enough to know I am better being here where I get different access and opportunities, than me being elsewhere, who maybe gets paid more but does not get anywhere near the same type of opportunities I have here."*

The desired outcome was explicit from the outset but not absolutely rigid, similarly how it was to be achieved was not set. The participants express an openness to learning from each other and the external environment, which encourages a flexibility in what the final outcome will look like and how they will achieve that. This attitude is assisting the nurturing of the collaboration allowing the group to continue and plan for the next steps:

*"…we are not set in stone, we are happy to have that discussion. The end goal is about the people…that is what we are backing."*

*"there is definitely a pathway for it to evolve in the future that can be quite positive."*
Having this flexibility factored into the collaborative goal is the preferred attitude of the organisations. This shared attitude means that slight goal shifts have not elicited strong negative responses: *"we would want to make that the best possible and try to influence that. It is better than nothing, I would want that to be done the best way possible."*
Although the collaborative meta-goal has yet to be achieved, the group have begun to take stock of the collaborative outputs to date:
"*It was nice to look back on what we had done even though we did not achieve the budget ask this year…. It has given us the opportunity to talk in a slightly different context."*
Being aware of these small achievements, micro-goals, and emerging goals are offering the participating stakeholders at least a perceived value; noting these small successes to date is motivating continued participation.

#### 4.2.3.3 PMM and Organisational Control

As discussed in the previous sections of the organisations involved in this collaboration have a level of commonality. They are working in the third sector and in this collaboration have uncovered similar belief systems. This notion of organisational fit, an alignment, aids the collaborative harmony: *"we are a more cultural work place fit for the organisations we work with."*
It has been challenging to always know what and how best to measure the group. The collaboration has not wanted to be prescriptive to the participating organisations in the work that they have been doing and there is a limited amount of human resource that could be dedicated to running the collaboration among their other commitments: *"we would love to have it as a full time person it is not a key sort of performance indicator for a lot of organisations in terms of that."*
A further barrier to creating a joint PMM system in this collaboration is the work culture of the participating organisations: "*There are no performance measures or targets…we aren't really a targeted work place."*
In a similar way a further barrier to implementing a congruent PMM system is that each organisation sees the outputs differently:
*"[we]don't measure success in the same way as other organisations might – others might have targets and KPIs, we do not."*

Although there is no shared performance system or prescribed collaborative targets, one of the organisations have recorded their own performance and achievements, ready to share into the group:

*"there were no specific targets, but we kept a track on who we were talking to, response from schools, mentions in the press..."*

It can be seen therefore that at times there is a disconnection between participants in how best to gauge the effectiveness of the work they are doing. However, as the collaboration has developed the group have been able to gain a better understanding of what success looks like for them collectively: *"we feel we have got our main recognition now among MSPs (Government Ministers), I think realistically that is probably a more useful indicator of success."*

In addition to the challenges of knowing how and what to measure, there is also the recognition that, as a new collaborative venture, relationships have needed building and maintaining. There has therefore been a reluctance and resistance to more mature technical and, or, tighter social controls: *"there wasn't we must get this many or this many, I think because it was the first time as a coalition we tried something like this."*

Meetings are arranged to keep on top of what each organisation is working on and to keep some momentum in the group:

*"We had a steering group that has met on a 6 weekly or bi monthly basis just to kind of make sure everyone is happy on board and can use their different strengths..."*

A leadership role was required to bring things in and to make sure it did not begin to drift. While it was not the intention to have a lead organisation or an appointed leader it did happen naturally: *"I am conscious that if someone does not take responsibility for an action, if it is everyone's problem then no one does it, so you need to have someone driving it consistently."*

Likewise, in the meetings the intention is to have them very relaxed and democratic, but it also requires an element of tightening social control:

*"We have been doing this as a group for over a year now, so the danger is keeping on track rather than just diverting into random chat… very good at chairing it and we have an agenda."*

One of the negatives of not having, and possibly a barrier to implementing, tighter social controls is that the work inevitably begins to drift, even when the goals are aligned, it has not always been the current number one priority among everyone: *"We try to meet every 2 months. That sometimes slips…it is just one of many things that everyone does."*

The danger of a more formalised performance system is it can alienate and put off some individuals and, or, the organisations they are representing and thus breaking the relationships, and with the power of exit, could be fatal:

*"I don't give a shit about targets, it did not drive me at all. We have loose targets here, I want to do the best I can – other organisations do it differently with KPIs and targets, but it is not a focal point for me."*

### 4.2.3.4 Organisational Learning

#### *4.2.3.4.1 Process Learning (Local collaborative) & Substantive Learning (Knowledge Creation and Transfer)*

The collaborating organisations are not solely dedicated to this one campaign. It is one of several projects that each are involved in and therefore facilitating time to spend together in face to face communication is a vital part in the learning processes*:*

*"…we talked about ways we could keep that going and getting more members along to steering groups and that kind of thing…"*

Those leading the meetings have made effort to create the correct environment to nurture openness and to give the platform where participants have felt like they can contribute. It has relied on individual attitudes and a willingness to learn from one another, reducing the threats of power, even if they are only perceived threats:

"*I don't always feel as empowered to give my feedback because I am in the room with more senior people but that gave a more level playing field, everyone had something they could say about it, it didn't matter what role you worked in, so that worked really well for collaborative working."*

During the meetings there is an open attitude and a willingness to learn during the time they spend together. The participating organisations are invited to share what they have been working on since the previous get together, individually or with partners in the collaboration, as a way of initiating knowledge sharing and creation. With these meetings and updates the group have facilitated opening up among the participants which has enabled explorative learning behaviours, however, so far much of that learning has not been translated into exploitative behaviours:

"*it was very open opportunity for us all to give our opinions on various parts, we had clear actions coming from that…not much has happened since …things should have changed but didn't because she left, and the snow!"*

This is evidence of barriers that exist, from both the internal and external environment, to exploiting the process learning that has occurred. The case supports that the learning attitudes of the participating organisations and individuals are part of inter-organisational learning; there exists the opportunity to learn by bringing together different expertise but only if there is a mixture of learning attitudes.

#### *4.2.3.4.2 Experiential Learning:*

There is already at the individual and organisational level a fair amount of experience in collaborative working. Such collaborative maturity has assisted in the work done for this case: *"We are used to that partnership working…the organisations themselves are used to working in partnership in different ways…."*

There is a belief that collaborating well is something that is embedded in the culture of the individual organisation and that experience does come through collaborating. When reflecting on this case more than one of the organisations cites learning from previous collaborations:

*"I was at a thing a few weeks ago and they were talking about, these other organisations in the room, saying we are really bad at collaborative working, and I thought 'speak for yourself everything we do in here is collaborative working'…We do so much that it comes really naturally."*

The organisation that has less collaborative experience expressed a belief that, as a small charity, they can take learnings from this collaboration and apply it to future projects. The learning carries with the two individuals involved, but, in such a small organisation the dissemination barrier is perhaps easier to overcome.

*"We have definitely learned a lot from it – I think you would take all the positive aspects of what we have learned if we are invited into other campaigns."*

Given that the case is still a live project, the participants case could not easily point to explicit evidence of experiential learning being exploited. There is however a belief in the organisations that have a collaborative culture that that they will be able to learn from this collaboration: *"well let's make it like [this] and you know it has got a good branding recognition."*

Further to learning to collaborate more effectively the networking and relationship building opens up potential for future developments and projects, adding to the general perceived value of the collaboration "*I think we have definitely got new routes that we did not have before, so that is really positive…they are really useful allies and partners…"*

The experiential learning of the collaboration, especially at individual and organisational level has developed the perception of success as it continues in a path towards achieving its collaborative goal.

#### 4.2.3.5 Organisational Controls and Learning

Inviting the participants to report back on progress, the group were invited to open up and share and create knowledge, updating on what had been working and looking for fresh ideas:

*"Yes we update them. We had one school student who took the campaign to heart and did a lot of awareness raising and we had invited her to speak to the group on her experience."*

The swot analysis was a tool that facilitated an open discussion and to capture some of the achievements to date, acting like an informal internal evaluation. This was a deliberately planned evaluation exercise, yet it was quite an open and participatory process that enabled exploration; both substantive and process learning:

*"…when we did the swot the strength of feeling from those in the room that actually know the numbers and facts, they were very vocal and gave us renewed confidence."*

Such a process allowed the group to assess how the collaboration was performing and came on the back of update reports from member organisations; discussing what had been happening and then arranging action for the opportunities that seemed most appropriate, explorative into exploitative behaviours:

"*…we agreed those, and we talked about other opportunities for influencing, updating where we are…things like signing off the correspondence and agreeing the core messages for the campaign."*

Taking time to reflect and evaluate on the work, even informally was a way of facilitating the opening-up process required to begin effective organisational learning.

#### 4.2.3.6 Organisational Learning and Goals

The networking and relationship building with other organisations was of added value to the organisations and was expressed as an unexpected output of the collaboration, an emerging goal achieved which added to the perceived ongoing value for the collaboration:

*"That was one of the great pluses for us as well, just having started here then we met people very quickly."*

Being able to gain experiential learning at the individual level worked as a continued motivation for participants:

*"This has been a great learning curve for me, I have learned an awful lot."*

*"These are opportunities for my development, my career."*

The open attitude to learning dovetails with open attitude to what the collaborative goal should be, either as an ultimate meta-goal or an interim target, while also allowing for emerging goals:

*"If someone identified a good way and then if another organisation said we have now got this but what about campaigning for that, if that met our organisational aims and objectives then we would be pretty supportive."*

#### 4.2.3.7 Organisational Controls and Goals

By not creating a mature collaborative PMM system, success is perceptual and subjective. It consequently allows a fluidity around the shared collaborative meta-goal:

*"So, it is a success just by the fact we are talking about it – saying it is not right. The success is keeping it alive and not letting it be buried for what the government want to talk about or tell us, we are trying to hold them to account, one of the main successes about it."*

Bringing in deadlines is a way of focusing the group on a particular goal:

*"I think we have always had this another external deadline or factor that we can work towards."*

Focusing on something at the meetings gives reason for participation, a sense of value in participation, while having small tangible outputs has motivated the group.

#### 4.2.3.8 All Three Overlap of Controls, Learning and Goals

This case is not forcing the issue fixed in only one possible outcome or an entirely objective sense of success and failure. It has had an open, democratic and reflective internal evaluation which dovetailed with the open explorative attitude to learning. Subsequently there is a recognition that they may need to alter their meta-goal, at least temporarily:

*"…where I made everyone do a swot analysis of the campaign because realistically, we are not going to get in the budget to see where we have been good and what can we improve on."*

Putting in some form of performance reflection allowed for the crystallisation of the learning and goals achieved, it opened the opportunity for exploitation of these outputs. However, as goals emerged and became clearer there was a frustration at the delays in continuing the positive action; lacking direction, from a leader perhaps, to engage in exploitative behaviours to push for collective action.

### 4.2.4 Case 4: This is Our Faith

The background of this Case can be read in Section 3.4.1.1.4

#### 4.2.4.1 Potential Value - Reasons for Collaborating

The collaboration was born out of a need for the proposed outcome of a new syllabus for religious education. Beginning as an ambition of one of the organisations as a sole project, there was a need for the knowledge and expertise of individuals from other organisations:

*"– it would only work if it was something that was done with other colleagues, very quickly we adopted a methodology in our work of bringing people into working groups and parties to try and address a need that was identified by everybody as a shared concern."*

The proposed outcome began to evolve when the project engaged in a consultative process. Others were invited to participate because they were involved in a similar field and it was felt they had the expertise and knowledge to share, and there was a general goal alignment between the participating organisations. This professional and organisational need aligning with the proposed outcome, coupled with examples of personal goal and motivation for wanting to be involved, lead to a strong foundation from which to develop the collaboration.

#### 4.2.4.2 Goals

Having goal congruence was a factor in this group achieving a collaborative advantage. This was evident not only in congruence among the participants at a collaborative level but also through the organisational and individual levels. Most were participating on a voluntary basis although some were modestly compensated for their time and out of pocket expenses. There was, however, no formality to this arrangement. All of those interviewed spoke of a personal and organisational need aligning with the aims of the collaboration:

*"Everything about that fitted in, aligned directly with the work I had done and continued to do."*

Adding to this stability was an alignment of the belief systems of those participating:

*"We were all committed…individually we all had something to gain from it, but actually we all, every one of us had something in common in faith, and saw this as their contribution to the good of the faith…"*

This altruistic drive played a role in the individual motivation not only to participate but to do so successfully. Despite the clear collaborative goal, it felt distant; what it would exactly look like in the end and how it would be achieved was not always clear. It was a task that demanded time and patience, and although there was this shared drive to do the job well and quickly, it was not as simple as that:

*"All of us felt a certain frustration in that we would like to dedicate the time and energy so that it could be done more intensely and quicker. At the same time as seeing the end goal, you know something is going to be produced, new ideas are emerging, what it would exactly be."*
There were multiple external threats to the shared meta-goal and these had to be managed. An awareness of the external pressure allowed that threat to be reduced or neutralised. One way of managing through such pressure was the ability to be open to small changes in the collaborative goal, flexibility in the outcome assisted in the resistance to threats from the external environment:
*"…they had finally accepted there can't be only one framework as the approaches are too different. We will have 2 but we will try to keep them together if possible, so they kind of run in parallel… all very well but if that comes as a result of us having to dilute what we are doing and make it less evidently about personal faith then it wouldn't be acceptable to us."*
This fluidity in goal management was an attitude adopted early in the collaboration. Early explorative learning activity before settling on the original meta-goal was evidence of an attitude of flexibility with regards to the outcome:
*"…the extent of the vision, creating the syllabus for Scotland, and a first syllabus that was going to be purely Scottish, because we had never had that before, we always used the Irish stuff and other people's materials. I suppose you could have walked away, I would say there were people who walked away and couldn't commit for various reasons."*
The group worked well under a clear goal. Uncertainty in the timeframe of the final period and a drying up of other goals, micro-goals or emerging goals, lead to a loss of 'momentum', a type of collaborative inertia:
*"…there definitely was a sense of regret, I think if we kept going, we could have done those things while waiting for Rome to come back and we could easily have incorporated the new material and changes, so yes I wouldn't be alone in that, there was a general sense of it."*
The success of the collaboration led a few to suggest that the group disbanded too early. Therefore, it was a missed opportunity to maintain the potential value, to look for other goals or to enhance the overall outcome of this project.

#### 4.2.4.3 PMM and Organisational Control

Even though this was an example of a successfully completed collaboration there was no evidence of a maturely developed performance measurement and management system. At the end, achieving the meta-goal, the success of the project, knowing a collaborative advantage had been achieved was through the satisfaction of the key stakeholder, the end user:

*"I think the fact that every school in Scotland is using it, not to say every school is using it perfectly, but everybody bought in."*

Looking at the evidence, one of the barriers to imposing a control system is the difficulty in controlling representatives from multiple organisations working together in an informal basis. Many, if not all, of the individuals were being pulled by other commitments*:*

*"…a challenge and a conflict, the writing of course took a lot of time…each would consider themselves to be the most important line manager…their work was the most important, so each would tell me how important they were."*

In general, the technical control was done on a basis of consultation with internal or external experts:

*"There were reflection points, checking in. We had experts and critical friends to refer to for educational or theological matters."*

There was a reluctance to engage in strict organisational controls given the voluntary nature and the complexity in doing so but time constraints required some tightening of the controls to ensure it did not drift:

"*I don't think initially there was [any performance targets] but I think we realised that it could go on infinitely for the next 20 years."*

Tighter social and increased technical controls, stricter deadlines for example, were required because of time pressures but it risked alienating those who had priorities away from this collaboration. This led to a tension in the positive of getting the work that had to be done completed versus, the risk of damaging relationships and ultimately losing members:

"*…they had certain deadlines which were always tomorrow in terms of things that needed to go in to be approved… I had to always make sure that we were making our deadlines at our end. It was difficult because some had other work to do, but it was recognised that we had to make the deadlines…"*

The leadership style adopted was a possible source of tension: *"His way of working was exactly the way I work, others might not like it."* Most were accepting of it and having a clear lead organisation *"worked well, keeping a tight rein on it."* There was a balance of leadership and a need to find the right level of controls: *"That balance where the leadership isn't always getting their own way, but it is strong clear goals, clear timescale, and a purpose, to be able to form that kind of team."*

This case displayed characteristics of having a more balanced attitude towards organisational controls, where the style would flow between looser and tighter social controls and a use of

technical control when it seemed most appropriate. Nurturing and managing the tensions within allowed the collaboration to continue towards achieving a collaborative advantage.

### 4.2.4.4 Organisational Learning

#### *4.2.4.4.1 Process Learning (Local collaborative) & Substantive Learning (Knowledge Creation and Transfer)*

Ensuring there were a variety of knowledge experts either internally or externally involved in the group meant that there was opportunity for substantive learning, which was embedded in the purpose of the collaboration:

*"[There were] experts and critical friends to refer to for education or theological matters."*

Aiding this was the creating of an open and social environment:

*"Various meetings took place… to promote and develop a framework…they finally accepted there can't be only one framework as the approaches are too different."*

Space was given for the participants to go and share and create knowledge before bringing it back centrally to try and exploit that learning fruitfully, learning by working in smaller groups then feeding back in to the larger group:

*"The primary school group would meet…in teams of 3 people, then the 6 would meet and the 6 would report back to the main group, so that is how it worked structurally.*"

Networking and relationship building through the social elements of the collaboration were *"quite crucial and key"* in creating trust and the opening up process required for substantive and process learning. This did require an ability to trust one another's expertise and be open to their understanding of the work being submitted, a willingness to put themselves in a state of vulnerability:

*"At times I was then the critical friend if it was my expertise…If people are critiquing honestly then you can move things forward."*

Not all the learning was necessarily virtuous. Processes changed when the group was put under pressure to quickly appease an external stakeholder and that space to ensure the changes were for the best got lost in the pressure:

*"….it was all hands-on deck, so you were allocated a portion of it and it had to be written as quickly as possible."*

In general, bringing a variety of expertise together and facilitating an open, sharing attitude of learning meant that in this case substantive learning could occur, which was supplemented with an attitude of flexibility embedded in the working groups that enabled process learning within the collaboration.

#### *4.2.4.4.2 Experiential Learning:*

With a variety of expertise in the room it is natural that there are different learning experiences and not all are shared. For some it can be an affirmation of existing knowledge:

*"…it can reaffirm what you think… it certainly it ticked every box for me. I can't really think of any times when I felt this isn't right or this isn't working."*

Transferring the learned knowledge and experience required a willingness from the participating individual to take that back to their organisation; it has been transferred and embedded into at least one of the organisations, perhaps aided by being a small organisation, nonetheless a dissemination process and attitude of change was required:

*"Processes in the organisation have been changed because of this experience…There is an open dissemination process, sharing information among staff about what goes on so what we learned from this project has been shared, it is a very small team."*

One of the organisations points to how they have directly learned from one collaboration and used it in another:

*"...better placed to go on and do these types of projects well? I would say definitely. The learning process of this is, yes...We have learned so much from the broad general education point of view going and can apply it to our senior development phase."*

More evident however was an individual sense of having learned how to collaborate more effectively in the future through having collaborated and *"having gone through a very involved and relatively long process*" however, not so much at an organisational level. For example, an individual left their organisation before any dissemination or transfer back could occur. In another example the participating individual was able to express a sense of being more collaborative 'ready' but there was not the evidence to show that this translated into the organisation to increase their organisational collaborative maturity:

*"Into another collaborative project, you would certainly take many aspects from the experience."*

The experience gained by working in this successful project has increased confidence in what they can be capable of in future collaborative work. It has opened opportunities for further collaborations that previously would not have been considered. Much of the experiential learning manifested itself in the forms of strengthened networks and relationships. Having been able to foster these gave a real sense of value and worth in participating, at least on an individual level.

### 4.2.4.5 Organisational Controls and Learning

When social controls were loosened, it facilitated an open and social environment which in turn facilitated exploratory substantive learning. The tension within the loose control system is that it allowed space for friction among the participants despite the positive nature of the learning facilitated:

*"…within that sub writing group, however, we were a group of 6 and there were tensions between us and the other group…where the clashes existed, they were separated. It naturally happened. I think it was good that it did that way. In our group, the 3 of us, it was a challenge but it we really worked together, there was a shared understanding among the 6 of us but absolutely there were tensions."*

Tightening the controls, focusing on the performance of the collaboration lead to substantive learning and progress:

*"…there were important timelines … we had to send all of our material off to the Archbishop to read, he was our critical friend… absolutely kept us all on a very tight timescale and we met every deadline. My recollection of it we were never missed a deadline, and that meant working at night time."*

Check points, consultation, feedback all facilitated learning opportunities and there was a positive relationship between these performance measures and virtuous learning, reducing the risk of the group becoming "*self-fulfilling*" in what it was achieving.

It is shown though that adjusting the organisational controls influenced the tensions that existed in the collaboration. Within this case, tightening the social control and implementing a more mature technical control to satisfy one particular stakeholder created tension; a disagreement in the manner and amount of measuring, fearing it would lead to possible 'too much' or non-virtuous learning. Nonetheless, tightening the controls, focusing on the performance of the collaboration lead to exploitation of the substantive learning and progress. Using external evaluators was one way of ensuring that the knowledge being created and exploited in the final document was virtuous in nature:

"*By sending it to the Vatican for approval we were able to for the first time define the Catholicity of our Schools, we couldn't do that before and this was above and beyond what we expected to achieve."*

Not having the requested international feedback was an example of a lack of more mature technical controls, which resulted in a possible missed learning opportunity:

"*What it missed was international, I kept saying what we need is an international critical friend, I thought we needed someone from outside."*

There was a fluidity in the social controls where the participants were sent to work in groups as they best saw fit before being called back to exploit the learning that had occurred in the working groups, without implementing technical controls as such:

*"I couldn't call it performance markers in any formal specific way. I think we were aware there was a time limit to it. so that helped us to stay on track. I suppose the dynamic of working in small groups and then coming back and there were suggestions."*

As the collaboration matured it managed to rotate, quite easily, the person charged with critiquing the work produced. This required trust to accept criticism and to work through the collaborative learning process. The environment was such that they referred to each other as "*the critical friend"* if it was that person's area of *"expertise."*

#### 4.2.4.6 Organisational Learning and Goals

The early consultation process led to substantive and process learning, through which the collaborative meta-goal crystallised: "*Just about that time as we published that initial consultation paper and it got reactions from colleagues."*

Such early stage openness to learning led to what became effectively the collaboration that this case study is analysing, becoming the *"3rd or 4th generation of working groups."*

Personal and organisational goals were being met through learning, focused particularly on networking, relationship and trust building, in this case quite embedded to the collaborative meta-goal and overall success of the project:

*"I don't think that we [as an individual and an organisation] would be as highly regarded by the education and Catholic community if we hadn't successfully done this."*

Openness to substantive learning dovetails with openness to the fluidity of the outcome; only a certain amount of the end goal was fixed, and other elements were open to development and change:

"*But as you are travelling along and doing the writing, new ideas are emerging, thoughts and what we could include in this syllabus program resource and even come to terms with what it would exactly be; a syllabus? A resource? Would it include pupil materials? .... Dialogue, discussion, all of that absolutely. Thrashing it out together*."

Fluidity caused tensions between some participating organisations and ultimately a way had to be decided on:

*"we were giving positive stuff, it wasn't just all criticism. But we had challenging discussions…"*

The knowledge created, but not used in the project, did not necessarily go to waste. Being able to use it a later date added perceived value to the individual and from this, other individual goals emerged. Giving space for this to occur aided the perception that being involved was worthwhile and gave motivation for continued participation:

*"It led to me being involved in other things at that national level and being able to lead with some expertise."*

Although the collaboration was nurtured by being open to some changes in the goal it had to be firm in its agreed fundamentals. The tensions led to small split in the membership where a participant could not reconcile with the new altered collaborative aim. Towards the end of the collaboration there was a missed opportunity to continue the group:

*"Many, including myself, felt that this was stage one and because we started to call ourselves the RE development group and I think we would have wanted to continue, the syllabus being step one, then going on to see about creating resources, but that didn't seem to be in the plan."*

Through being too closed to the emerging goals and opportunities for further exploration the group did not continue beyond the creation of the syllabus.

#### 4.2.4.7 Organisational Controls and Goals

There could have been other ways to reach the shared vision of a new syllabus and, or, it could have looked differently. Eventually tighter controls helped focus the group on the document outcome, stopping a potential impasse on philosophical debate around pedagogy or another theme. The tighter control was needed to overcome this possible barrier to achieving collaborative advantage, the meta-goal of the project*:*

*"that was our absolute ultimate goal… We were told that this is the way we were going to be doing it and we delivered."*

While the group were still in the development process of the document, they used critical friends for critique. This ensured a balance of flexibility in what was being created and managing the expectations of external stakeholders:

*"We sent out our work to partners for feedback. We had polarised views on whether things were too easy or too challenging for the end users, so it helped us focus on what the happy medium would be."*

The group knew that success was achieved by measuring the outcome against the satisfaction of the stakeholders: *"we were happy with it; the community was happy with it."*

#### 4.2.4.8 Overlap of Controls, Learning and Goals

This case shows that there is a link between the functions of organisational control, goal setting and facilitating organisational learning.

The looser social controls facilitated an open and social environment which in turn facilitated substantive learning. Having a focus on the end goal helped overcome any differences of opinion. Tightening the social controls and trying to introduce more mature technical controls lead to clear action for the collaboration. Focusing efforts into progressing the project towards its end point it put into practice the learning it had done, in both process and substantive forms:

*"…want to make sure that anything that was written was acceptable to conformity of church teaching and all the Bishops, latterly I would be sending draughts to the Archbishop, he would come back with lots of comments and alternative proposals…and ultimately it was going to Rome [for approval]."*

Alongside a clear picture of what the outcome should look like, there was a shared drive, goal alignment and altruistic beliefs. This made it easier to have performance measures and therefore understand the value of the learning that had been put into action:

*"…there were important timelines … we had to send all of our material off to the Archbishop to read, he was our critical friend…. absolutely kept us all on a very tight timescale and we met every deadline. My recollection of it we were never missed a deadline, and that meant working at night time."*

"*Professional people who were used to that style of working, but also there was a real drive. There was an excitement and real belief about it, we all bought into this."*

The shared drive seemed to reduce any friction created from variations in the social controls.

### 4.2.5 Case 5: Just Faith

The background of this Case can be read in Section 3.4.1.1.5

#### 4.2.5.1 Potential Value - Reason for Collaborating

There was a desire to encourage people to engage with the social teachings of the Catholic Church, serving both local and global needs. The areas of social justice were aligned with the general objectives of the three key participating organisations however there was an unclear collaborative goal; it was exploratory, described as having a *"broad suggested outcome."*

The motivation or need for collaboration among the three was not entirely organic or from within as it was suggested by an external review of Catholic charities in Scotland:
*"…but this review was done and recommended that these agencies should work more closely together."*
This created an underlying sense of unease at working together on this collaboration as the organisations were not unknown to each other and there was a perceived jealousy between them. This gave an unhelpful sense of competition over co-opetition or co-operation:
*"…there has always been a question of guarding your own territory… It is sad that it is as petty as that, but you always have to take the human element into consideration."*
The project brief stated aims but lacked objectives. Curiously although the aims of the project are quite vague and set out in general to explore collaborative working between the participating organisations, the agents within the collaboration were unable to express these as tangible or tacit goals, with the ambiguity erecting itself as a barrier to goal completion (JustFaith, 2014).

#### 4.2.5.2 Goals

There was a compatibility among the partnering organisations, the organisational goals were similar, but the difficulty was agreeing a clear collaborative goal or what that would look like:
*"Each of the organisations had a different view on what Just Faith meant to them and what it really should have been doing."*
This confusion over the overarching goal of the project was a constant threat to the collaboration leading to some influential and powerful stakeholders being able to interpret the purpose of it in their own way, causing a rupture between some relationships:
*"I just about blew a gasket because the whole idea was not to set up a network, it was to improve the already existing network, to expand their capacity, not to reinvent the wheel and set up a new network."*
To bring the collaboration to some sort of conclusion there was an agreement reached to shift the meta-goal by concentrating on delivering a conference as a final outcome.
One of the organisation's had the same representative throughout, which gives weight to the value of goal congruence between the three levels; collaborative, organisational, and individual:

*"…this was an opportunity I saw personally to see both organisations working together for their mutual benefit but also never losing sight of the fact that they were created for a purpose, so it wasn't about strengthening the organisations for the sake of it."*

Further evidence pointed to a motivation and commitment from the individual that runs through to the collaboration, an alignment between goals at the different levels. Not to be unexpected therefore, in the region where most of the positive outputs occurred, the balance of individual, organisational and collaborative goals was more harmonious. Conversely, collaborative inertia could be traced to the periods when it became less of a priority for the organisations and those representing them: *"this project had not been a priority for anybody for the 2 years it had been running."*

It was generally felt that the focus was too ambitious, the meta-goal was too large, and they should have tested the idea in a smaller geographical area, achieving small wins and building from there:

*"In my own personal opinion, they should have rolled it out in one diocese and tried the materials, piloted it somewhere, that's certainly what I think they should have done."*

The lack of tangible outputs or success stories began to create tensions among the stakeholders. It is perhaps surprising that there was enough interest from the stakeholders to keep the collaboration alive. There were, however, some other outputs and emerging opportunities that were giving the sense of the collaboration being worthwhile in the fragmented state it found itself. Towards the end, it was the motivation and will of the participating individuals that kept the collaboration going, their shared belief and altruistic drive to see it come to a positive conclusion.

#### 4.2.5.3 PMM and Organisational Control

This case had an absence of formal measurements and little performance management. Culturally the two smaller organisations were not used to setting targets and the larger third organisation felt unable to impose measurement in fear of breaking what was at certain points a fragile relationship, they were unable to "*set targets that were meaningful for everyone."*

The smaller organisations resisted control from the larger one through perceived threat. Possibly as a result of few perceived valuable outputs, the mistrust and resentment built up meaning introducing any form of measurement was resisted, even just to record who was in attendance:

*"I organised an agenda, and when I passed the register round it was 'What's this? I've never had to sign anything like this before; don't be so stupid' and 'for goodness sake we are not at*

*the council now' – It was the way things were said, I just wanted to know who was at the meeting."*

The organisations were to be on an equal footing within the collaboration, but they were unable to establish a clear leadership model with the larger of the three either assuming, or being left, to the administrative elements given their greater resource. The intention was to have a democratic participatory model, but it was challenging without prior experience of doing so:

*"When you do not have a top down thing saying you have got to work together, then everybody can decide themselves whether they are going to work together or not….or whether they say 'stuff that, I'm not going to do that, you are not telling me what to do!"*

Thus, what followed was more a model of 'lost' organisational control as opposed to a deliberate strategy of loose social controls. An example of the consequences of this loose, or lost, control was misplaced trust or over confidence in the process:

*"It was almost too late by the time I go on the steering group but as a member of the commission I would have asked a lot more questions, because I just trusted things."*

In the early stages there was even little control over the regularity of the meetings. The collaboration fragmented into the three regions, the group seemed to lose control centrally and it made it difficult to measure or to learn from each other, allowing inertia to creep in:

*"…meetings were not as regular, no-one was really coordinating, just a case of 'oh we need to have a steering group meeting, we haven't had one for 6 weeks."*

The collaboration was operating like this, from the outset as the case was loosely designed to be exploratory and therefore it did not *"want to be directive"* and preferred, initially, too see *"what would come up*."

The lack of controls was a contributing factor in the project becoming "*stretched*"; it lasted five years instead of the initially proposed two years, eventually concluding with the conference.

## 4.2.5.4 Organisational Learning

### *4.2.5.4.1 Process Learning (Local collaborative) & Substantive Learning (Knowledge Creation and Transfer)*

The case shows a lack of learning used in decision-making processes. There were opportunities for local collaborative learning, none more so that during their interim evaluation, but these were not capitalised on. Although learning was formalised in a report the changes they could have made were not carried through:

*"The report was interesting and the suggestions in it were all sensible suggestions and would have made a difference if they had been implemented at the time the report was done…it became too late to make a difference."*

The expectation seemed to be that organisational learning would just occur by virtue that they have different resources and expertise instead of nurturing it through pro-actively exploring and exploiting the opportunities. One of the barriers to any sort of learning occurring in the group was the changes in personnel as there was no handover or transfer processes in place, either at the collaborative or organisational level. In other words, the knowledge, created or transferred, was simply leaving with the individual who had received it, a distinct lack of capturing and storing the learning. This was evident in the organisational culture though where it was not happening at that level either:

*"…the personnel keep changing. The person who was managing it left and then the person who replaced her on the steering committee had no history of the project at all, and then went off sick."*

*"One person moving out of a small organisation has a major impact."*

Substantive learning, knowledge transfer, was difficult as the smaller organisations learning attitude stances were averse to giving or opening up too much:

*"It wasn't a resentment, not that they did not want me there, it was just that they couldn't have me there. I think that would have been a useful thing to do, to help me belong to all the organisations."*

There were personnel changes during the collaboration which did enable an improvement in personal relationships between the organisations but there was a legacy of this distrust from surviving members. However, once those relationships strengthened, substantive learning, growing relationships and networks added to the perceived value and gave some subjective views of being worthwhile:

*"I think ultimately it was a successful project simply because the relationships between the 3 organisations have been strengthened..."*

#### *4.2.5.4.2 Experiential Learning:*

For the most part the case highlights perceived and, or, tacit experiential learning from the collaboration. For each organisation though to be able to exploit any experiential learning they need an internal dissemination process, and each of the three organisations in this case were able to point to internal reports they created about the project. The evidence to show how or if this is being currently exploited is variable by organisation.

#### 4.2.5.5 Organisational Controls and Learning

There were some positives outputs from one of the regions, but the group were unable to exploit and, or, transfer the good practice from there into the other two regions. This was possibly due to the absence of performance measures to really understand what was occurring in that area. An inability to exploit learning at an earlier stage lead to the feeling of inertia and it not fulfilling the potential value the collaboration had:

*"I think there are lessons to be learned from the evaluation…I don't think either personally or from an organisational point of view it was a success...it did not fulfil its potential."*

The externally facilitated interim evaluation was the only formalised performance measure through the project. This was able to point to areas for improvement and general failings while highlighting the strengths and more positive outputs of the project at that time. It explicitly stated:

*"it will be important that clear procedures to monitor progress and capture learning are put in place….and not to let things drift."*

There was a reflection day to discuss the interim performance evaluation and this was able to focus the group. The inertia threating the collaboration was highlighted and consequently forced the group to revisit the potential value in the collaboration. Such an exercise shows the benefit of temporarily tightening the social controls of the project. Ultimately however, while the interim report gave rise to learning opportunities, they failed to translate it into exploitative behaviours, nor could it force the exploitation of the learning outcomes.

#### 4.2.5.6 Organisational Learning and Goals

Quite early on, the collaboration changed from being national to multi-regional, evidence of using process learning and being open to goal changes:

*"– so, it was to try and get a different spread of area and context and to see what would work."*

The lack of recording and storing the learning that occurred in the earlier stages of the collaboration meant there was no proper hand over when personnel changed, and it stopped being a priority for some or all of the participants:

*"…this project had not been a priority for anybody for the 2 years it had been running…this had almost been found in a drawer somewhere and it was what is this all about, she had no hand over for it…*"

Changes in personnel brought improved goal congruence, most notably at the individual level and they became more open in their attitude to compromises, implementing some changes, for the sake of the collaboration:

*"So, you had different people involved and I can't emphasise enough how important that change was. In general, in any project the people have to be committed to it and have to be prepared to make compromises and to see that there is something worthwhile in it."*

Too rigid an attitude from some resulted in the group resisting the suggested changes in the processes or to the many other emerging goals and opportunities and this caused unrest:

*"If the person with the strong opinions didn't get their way it was just another resentment."*

Making a conscious effort to learn from the situation can go hand in hand with goal nurturing, motivating across the individual, organisational and collaborative levels:

*"I thought the project was important and I thought it was important that we worked together and that we learn lessons. I didn't see that from the people [originally] representing [my organisation], so I have a sense that they maybe weren't too happy about it."*

The personnel change and the improved focus did eventually help the project. Towards the later stages of the collaboration there was a spirit of exploration, looking for other outcomes to make the collaboration worthwhile. This led to some further networking and relationship and trust building, an indirect consequence of the original collaboration. The conclusion of the collaboration saw the focus become fixed on delivering a conference. The collaboration was able to exploit some of whatever learning had been made over the course of their work together:

*"The conference was a success it brought together a lot of people …. I think it has probably made the 3 agencies more aware of one another, and what they do."*

#### 4.2.5.7 Organisational Controls and Goals.

Having an undefined goal made introducing technical controls difficult, there was also no pressure from anywhere to do so, which stopped any urgency to bring in tighter social controls:

*"I don't think [the goals] were clear, I think they thought this is a good idea and we'll do this….to see if it might work…. there was no financial pressure to produce."*

There was a realisation that it is desirable to have a baseline from which to measure, targets with timescales, but the collaboration struggled to introduce this:

*"…there were no base lines to work from, we did not know how we would measure, I could not measure an increase in activity, an increase in donations, because we had nothing to mark it from so nobody had done that type of work before we came in. Each of the organisations had a different view on what [it] meant to them and what it really should have been doing."*

The previous quote sums up that, without having clear goals, especially an idea of what the congruent goal or meta-goal was, it was unknown what to measure, much less how.

There was a feeling the collaboration had to be democratic, playing politics while being aware of individual goals and sensitivities:

*"Now we could not bypass them because that would not have been good politics with the organisation, so you are trying to work through them and encourage them, so it was a struggle."*

The collaboration was trying to be open to emerging goals and avoided dictating them. Negatively, this 'free reign' could have been one of the reasons why it began to drift. Without having strict or formal reporting there was the chance to explore other possibilities and test the created materials in some regions that were not originally targeted:

*"…there was nothing for us to ultimately achieve apart from delivering [the materials]. I took that to Aberdeen, to Edinburgh which weren't part of our project."*

The loose organisational controls saw different collaborative and organisational goals coming through from the different regions in which the work was being done. If managed well, this could have been a positive for the project, but this seem to occur under lost control as opposed to just a loosening of control, hence the collaboration becoming fragmented:

*"[What] we have to do, is be sensitive to the individuals involved.…different perspectives, everybody looks at things from a different angle and it doesn't look quite the same."*

Eventually, due to dissatisfaction of the outputs of the project, it was decided to concentrate on the fixed outcome of delivering a conference. There became less flexibility for other proposals to be brought to the table:

*"…and they were very focused on having a fabulous big event which would make up for everything but rather than allowing me to organise that event individuals had decided what would happen at the event before I arrived and any suggestions to any changes of that were instantly dismissed."*

With a final goal agreed of ending the collaboration through a public conference, the organisational controls were tightened by identifying the largest of the three organisations as

the lead. This gave focus to the group to get the collaboration concluded and done within a new identified timeframe.

### 4.2.5.8 Overlap of Controls, Learning and Goals

This case shows evidence of barriers to implementing a PMM system; non-clarity of goals, tensions in the relationships and organisational culture. Not managing the controls seemed to negatively impact the facilitation of valuable learning and goal opportunities, leading to a general malaise:

*"It was left to people, in my view, to get on with it and some were more enthusiastic than others."*

The project was too ambitious, it lacked small wins. The learning around this came too late at a post project review:

*"I think so, when the evaluation becomes available, my comments were if we were doing this again, we wouldn't be so ambitious, go for smaller more discreet objectives and then say, if we can do that then can we do something else."*

There were opportunities for exploiting organisational learning, however there were barriers to achieving this. The open and exploratory nature of the collaboration led to implementing a faith in action package from Ireland. They did make efforts at the beginning to use it but failed to really focus on its impact and to follow it up. This example of substantive learning shows the potential being nurtured in an exploratory stage but the value not being understood by not shifting to a more exploitative stage:

*"Yeah so there is that kind of thing going on but also this idea of let's see what we can do and one of those was through…an Irish agency…so we adapted it for a Scottish audience."*

The networking and associated experiential learning added to the perceived value, and these 'other' goals gave the sense of success to some. The inability to engage in a measuring process was a barrier to quantifying the goal output success and the learning which occurred:

*"The conference was an output that everyone wanted and that everyone was happy with. I don't think individually there was much success for the organisations, it has just led to closer working relationships and getting to know each other better, but there are always unintended outcomes of the projects and this was probably the biggest one."*

#### *4.2.5.8.1 Summary*

The project was seen through to the end of the funding period and did conclude with a conference to celebrate the work of the participating organisations in the work they do for faith based social justice. Given the non-contractual obligation of each of the organisations to

continue then a motivation of some sort has been maintained throughout. The organisations involved did not see the meta-goal become any less ambiguous, but the interim evaluation report gave each the opportunity to reflect on the value in continuing. The group were beginning to see some development in one of the regions and that gave some notion of potential success, but the group failed to grasp the learning opportunity to implement the ideas and suggestions from this region or the interim report. As the project developed, there was a hope and drive that something worthwhile would come out of working together and this seemed to stem from new individuals getting involved in the project and not the result of the interim evaluation report.

## *4.3 Within Case Summary*

While there is evidence of participating organisations in collaborations measuring the value of the outputs of the collaboration, there is little evidence of joint, or collaborative, performance measurement and management systems. Given what is known about the challenges of creating a joint PMM system this was not unexpected but there was a dearth of even basic joint technical controls or performance measures in the cases. The most common technical control was goal setting and attainment, but this varied by case as each did not enjoy the same levels of explicit goal congruence. While the amount and level of technical control found in each case varies there was greater evidence of social organisational controls in play. This management of performance was not always explicit but coming through the data, especially in the verbal accounts and the observations of each case, were applications of social controls, from instances of quite controlling management to more participatory and autonomous styles. The social controls in each case tended not to be static, and poor management of the control type used allowed collaborative inertia to creep in, with some occasional evidence of control of the collaboration becoming lost.

A myriad of learning types was documented across the cases, although not always easily distinguishable. However, following the a-priori coding of the data it was possible to document them by ‘process and substantive learning’ and ‘transferable and experiential learning.’ By separating learning types this way it has become apparent that learning takes place, much like goal attainment, across the three levels of the collaboration; the collective, the organisational and the individual. These different levels of learning were particularly evident in instances of possible transferable, or experiential, learning. Not one of the cases

had a shared transferable learning story among its various participants. How each of the participating organisations used the knowledge gained or created seems to come down to the individual's willingness to transfer it back to their organisation and how the individual organisation absorbs or disseminates it. There is a range of examples that show individuals and organisations can learn from a collaboration, but it presents itself as irregular evidence, which raises questions of organisational dissemination and absorptive capacity alongside other possible barriers, understanding of which is beyond the boundaries of the investigation.

The collaborations in each case were or are maintained, despite little explicit accountability and often unclear goals, purpose, or joint understanding. As there is no formal obligation to continue with the collaboration then there must be value for the participants, even tacit, which makes them worthwhile. The theme of goals presented itself very strongly in each case with individuals, organisations and collaborations expressing satisfaction and dissatisfaction at a range of outputs. Key in each case is the management of the multitude of goals, needs and wants of the many stakeholders and this is less challenging when individual motivations and belief systems are compatible. Alongside the management of goals, it has been noted in each case that goals are a theme which finds itself strongly linked to both explicit and tacit learning experiences, again expressed individually, organisationally and collectively. Likewise, as noted above, goal attainment and management of goals formed part of the role played by organisational control settings in each case.

In this chapter the five cases used for this study have been analysed using a template analysis and the findings of the key themes are discussed alongside the evidence. Each case has shown that there are common themes of organisational learning and organisational control and that there exists a dyadic relationship between them. Further to this, each of these themes has its own dyadic relationship with the theme of goals in the collaboration and of additional interest is the intertwined relationship that all three themes present in each case. The table of key within case findings is displayed in Appendix C. These common themes and relationships across the cases become the starting point to build a cross case analysis which follows in the next section.

## 4.4 Cross Case Analysis

The cross-case analysis technique for this multiple case study research follows the methods suggested by academic literature and is discussed in Section 3.5.3**.** There is a deductive stage of analysis based on the theoretical propositions that led the case study in the first instance (Yin, 2003). This moves to an inductive stage of analysis using a variable oriented strategy to identify themes that cut across the cases. This seeks out emergent themes that are linked in some way to the different variables of the researched cases and involves asking what is similar, what is different and why (Eisenhardt, 1989; Voss, Tsikriktsis and Frohlich, 2002). The emerging themes were goal setting and organisational controls, which came through more strongly than the a-priori coding of performance measurement and management. The three overarching themes of organisational learning, organisational controls, and goals were evidently linked in several instances, either as a pairing of themes or as all three themes intertwined. These relationships were explored above during the within case analysis. Preparation for cross-case analysis is compiled of two stages. Firstly, the 'within-case' findings that combined two of the theoretical themes from the a-posteriori codes are displayed on a matrix. A sample for Case 1 is shown in Figure 4:1

Using the within-case findings (Appendix C) and the literature review discussion (Section 2.6) the organisational controls identified could be split into social and technical controls. These control modes were further identified by type; loose or tight social control and low or high technical control maturity.

Forms of organisational learning in these relationships continue to be classed as either experiential learning or a combination of process and substantive learning.

During the within case analysis 'goals' are viewed as individual, organisational or collaborative. The within-case analysis findings allow these to be split into two distinct groups; 'collaborative goals' and 'individual and/or organisational goals'; in other words, shared or separate goals.

Secondly, findings from the within case analysis which emerged from a relationship between organisational control, organisational learning, and goals (Overlap of themes - 'All Three') are displayed on a separate data matrix. A sample for Case 1 is shown in Figure 4:2. In this triangular relationship of themes in the cases, there is minimal evidence of technical control

other than ‘goals.’ Thus, all other forms of technical control are removed from this section of the cross-case analysis, while social controls can be identified by their extremities of tight and loose. ‘Goals’ however continues to be treated as the broadly defined term used in the theory of collaborative advantage and involves a perception of success.

Where all three of the key themes are present in the data it becomes increasingly difficult to distinguish types or forms of learning. Similarly, boundaries of goal levels become blurred in the data. Thus, the matrix is displayed using the following a-posteriori codes:

- Learning and Goals
- Social Loose and Learning
- Social Loose and Goals
- Social Tight and Learning
- Social Tight and Goals

| KSGC | Process/Substantive | Experiential | Social Loose | Social Tight | Technical Low | Technical High | Collaborative Goals | Org/Indv Goals |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Process & Substantive Learning | N/A | | | | | | | |
| Experiential | | N/A | | | | | | through experiential/exploratory learning accommodating individual organisational goals has motivated collaborators |
| Social Loose | Extreme loose control resulted in poor communication and weakened relationship lead to a barrier organisational learning | | N/A | | Extreme loose control resulted in poor communication and weakened relationship was a PM barrier | | resisted the desire from some to tighten the social controls because do not want to engage in a shared goal beyond their own altruistic ambitions for the collaboration | resisted the desire from some to tighten the social controls because do not want to engage in a shared goal beyond their own altruistic ambitions for the collaboration |
| Social Tight | | | | N/A | | | | |
| Technical Low | Barriers of joint performance measures created a barrier to collaborative process learning | | | | N/A | | resisted the desire from some to bring in more mature technical measures of success because do not want to engage in a shared goal beyond their own altruistic ambitions for the collaboration | resisted the desire from some to bring in more mature technical measures of success because do not want to engage in a shared goal beyond their own altruistic ambitions for the collaboration |
| Technical High | | | | | | N/A | | |
| Collaborative Goals | Lack of explicit shared/agreed meta goal barrier to some OL opportunities; Tension in goals creates or highlights different attitudes to learning | Tension in goals creates or highlights different attitudes to learning | Tensions (friction) created in the non-collaborative goal leads to disagreement in how to monitor and control | Lack of explicit shared/agreed meta goal barrier to PM opportunities | Tensions (friction) created in the non-collaborative goal leads to disagreement in how to monitor and control | Lack of explicit shared/agreed meta goal barrier to PM opportunities | N/A | |
| Org/Indv. Goals | Open emerging goals gave general organisational learning through exploratory behaviours which motivated collaborators. | Open emerging goals gave general organisational learning through exploratory behaviours which motivated collaborators | | hidden goals or undeclared agenda barrier to a collaborative PM | | hidden goals or undeclared agenda barrier to a collaborative PM | | N/A |

**Figure 4:1 Example Paired Theme Matrix for Cross-Case-Analysis**

| | Learning | Goals | Social Loose | Social Tight |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Learning** | N/A | | | |
| **Goals** | Not reaching a collaborative goal is barrier to more exploitative behaviours [e.g. possible process improvements] | N/A | | Not reaching a collaborative goal is barrier to PMM, more controls |
| **Social Loose** | **Exploratory learning**; perceived organisational value | **Hidden, assumed, explicit organisational and individual goals; No collaborative goal.** perceived organisational value | N/A | |
| **Social Tight** | | | | N/A |

**Figure 4:2 Example 'All Three' Theme Matrix for Cross-Case Analysis**

The search for similarities and differences in themes that cut across all the cases begins with the second set of matrices (e.g. Figure 4:2):

- Social organisational controls continue to appear as either ‘loose’ or ‘tight’.
- Organisational learning types could be categorised as either ‘exploitative’ or ‘explorative’.
- Types of goals appear as either quite clear or uncertain, so these too are categorised as ‘exploitative’ or ‘explorative’.

Thus, there are four categories identified. These are coded by colour as shown below in Table 4:1. This colour coding was applied to all five cases and a repeatable pattern is seen. To further develop and support thematic patterns from the combination of all the themes, the first set of cross-case matrices was searched for similar occurrences. Colour coded matrices are displayed in Appendix D**.**

| |
|---|
| 1. Loose social controls with Exploratory learning and goals |
| 2. Tight social controls w/ Exploratory learning and goals |
| 3. Tight social controls w/ Exploitative learning and goals |
| 4. Loose social controls w/ Exploitative learning and goals |

**Table 4:1 Colour Coded Categories for Cross-Case Analysis**

Having completed the colour coding and analysed the repeatable patterns the following chapter discusses these with the findings of the literature review and draws some theoretical conclusions to the study.

# 5 Findings

As the aim of this research is to develop theory beyond simply testing extant theory, the next stage of is to take the findings from the cross-case analyses and discuss them in relation to the extant literature and theories in question (Section 3.5.3). This chapter, therefore, presents the findings of the cross-case analysis and discusses them accordingly. Patterns emerge from the analysis which form a theoretical model with supporting propositions. This is followed by a reflection on the literature-based propositions which guided the study and to conclude the chapter the confirmed propositions are displayed.

## *5.1 Discussion*

### 5.1.1 Organisational Learning with Looser Social Control Model

There were at least two of the Cases (1 and 5) which were dominated by exploratory learning behaviours and actions, these were also quite prevalent in Case 2. Each of the five cases however, to a varying degree, encouraged exploratory learning behaviours by allowing aspects of them to emerge organically through unprescribed social actions. As collaborations either form or develop, they explore both the other partners and the collaborative purpose (Hibbert and Huxham, 2005; Argote, 2011). The danger within this phase is spending too much resource on exploratory learning behaviours without engaging in meaningful action. Similarly, another trap is to explore details which prove to be of little value or relevance. The ambiguity of partner learning in a collaboration (Huxham and Vangen, 2000b; Hibbert and Huxham, 2005) is evidenced in the cases where there are either so many partners that learning about them all becomes difficult, as witnessed in Case 2, or there is a difficulty in controlling the turnover of volunteers or other individuals, as reported in Case 1.

Loose social controls allow for substantive learning, both the creation and transfer of knowledge, among the multiple agents involved (Turner and Makhija, 2006), especially at the individual level. The findings show, more so in Cases 1 and 2, a struggle to exploit learning that is occurring. In absence of joint performance measures there was not the coordination to evaluate learning outputs, exploit them, or to test their virtuosity. While the open loose nature of social controls permits space for social interactions, there is often the absence of leadership, collective or hierarchical, to coordinate local collaborative process learning. Much like in SMEs as found by Ates *et al.* (2013), the collaborations without much emphasis on planning and performance allows for greater flexibility in knowledge creation, a form of organisational learning, and allows goal setting to be fluid, open and emerging. Finding itself

in a loose model with less directive agendas positively gives the opportunity for exploration which is often overlooked in favour of the preferred solution of those with power, without testing the alternatives (Samset, Andersen and Austeng, 2014). However, in an exploratory stage, without an understanding of shared and common goals, communication can be negatively affected and lead to losing control and collaborative inertia.

While the research was not measuring commitment to the collaboration there is evidence that perceived value is gained by allowing for flexibility and openness for participants to work on individual and organisational goals. This adds to Vangen, Hayes and Cornforth (2015) who write that putting a more participative governance model in place ***might*** be beneficial in encouraging a longer-term commitment to a collaboration. Some of the individual and organisational success criteria has been expressed by transferable and experiential learning outputs gained from exploratory learning behaviours, thus these findings point to a more participative control model increasing the longer-term commitment among participants. Without the ability to engage in worthwhile exploitative behaviours, the research also extends the findings of Ates *et al.* (2013) into the collaborative setting and posits that collaborations which desire to be 'organic' and exploratory reduce goal and success specificity.

### 5.1.2 Increasing the Social Control

As social controls become less participatory, there is an increase in co-ordinated organisational learning which seeks to include the specific skills and knowledge from participating collaborators. Substantive, goal oriented, learning and process learning, exploring partners and purpose (Hibbert and Huxham, 2005), are all still seen but they occur under a more limited scope, within an agenda of an actual, or perceived, leader. The findings add empirical evidence to Huxham and Hibbert (2004, p. 16) assertion that the 'management style' of the collaboration can have an influence on learning attitudes. Social controls that are at the relatively 'closely controlling' end of the spectrum favour explicit management functions such as defining goals, specifying processes and evaluating progress.

From an organisational control perspective and considering such management functions as technical controls, the data compliments the current understanding of the levers of control (Simons, 1994) and adds to it in this context; asserting that that social and technical controls co-exist and require simultaneous consideration (Cardinal, Sitkin and Long, 2004; Bititci *et al.*, 2012; Tessier and Otley, 2012; Smith and Bititci, 2017). Although there is little evidence

of performance measurement in these cases, there is a focus in this area of collaborative goal setting and definition, which is a diagnostic technical control. The cases show that with tighter social control the learning behaviours are framed. Although Simons (1994) describes the bounded element of the control framework a 'technical control', it is heavily influenced by tighter social controls; a belief in the purpose and scope of the collaboration which is driven by those controlling the agenda. Openness to learning, engaging in exploratory behaviours, even if bounded, assists in reducing the threat of non-virtuous learning, for example, if the lead organisation is blindly optimistic in their viewpoint before making key decisions or taking action (Haji-Kazemi, Andersen and Klakegg, 2015).

### 5.1.3 Increased Goal Focus

Once a specific goal has reached by the collaboration, or been imposed upon it, there is little room for changing the purpose or meta-goal, above all when there are time constraints (Haniff and Fernie, 2008); tightening social controls therefore is beneficial for getting the job done, exploiting any previous strategic decision making as opposed to seeking alternatives. Learning types become less distinct (Hibbert and Huxham, 2005, p. 66) and exploitative learning behaviours are more prevalent.

Under tighter social controls, the dominance of learning exploitation evidenced with a clearer goal is not unexpected and adds to the argument that formal authority leads to increased exploitative behaviours (Holmqvist, 2003). Whilst inter-organisations are inherently unstable (Huxham and Vangen, 2005) there is stability found in goal specificity. Thus, while some participants may be forced to leave through irreconcilable differences in a tightly controlled collaboration, a stability is offered which focuses exploitation of learning and a clearer measurement of output. The belief that tighter organisational controls are more conducive to a selfish learning attitude (Huxham and Hibbert, 2004; 2008) is not entirely supported by these findings. While selfish attitudes undoubtedly can exist when focusing on a specific output or outcome, exploiting learning is not intrinsically selfish; it can be acting to the benefit of all in the collaboration so to gain collaborative advantage.

### 5.1.4 Balancing the Themes: Learning; Social Controls; Goals

As seen, especially in Case 4, trust in the relationship and regular communication channels allow for participatory behaviours and a clearer shared understanding of the common goals (Ates *et al.*, 2013), which in turn support balanced organisational learning behaviours.

In this case the motivational factors of the participants to continue learning towards a collaborative advantage increased when working under loose social controls. Open social interaction was encouraged, dovetailing with open attitudes to learning, alongside goal specificity and congruence. This goal specificity and goal congruence allows for a variety of learning attitudes (Huxham and Hibbert, 2004; 2008), even embracing the positive nature of selfish learning which is required to benefit the collaborative goal, and on occasion to motivate the needs of the individual participants. Such learning attitudes and balance of organisational control allow for individuals and organisations to achieve their own goals concurrently with the collaborative goal. When lines between exploratory and exploitative learning becomes less obvious it points to an optimum balance of explorative and exploitative behaviours (Holmqvist, 2003). When this occurs in the evidence it shows an ability to search for ways to get the job done while being open to creating new knowledge and ideas.

The findings extend and bring together those of Argote and Miron-Spektor (2011), Huxham and Hibbert (2004), and Turner and Makhija (2006), showing that when the social interactions among the network were open, established and stable, the collaboration was able to more readily exploit learning created or exchanged through the interactions. Reducing the social control gives room to accommodate the agendas of the participating individuals and organisations, although they may remain hidden or in the background (Das and Teng, 1998). Motivation and success, whether perceived or explicit, for individuals and the collaboration can come through multi-level goal engagement. This balanced learning in a more participatory control setting is pointing towards an almost harmonising idealism. It is seen on occasion in the Cases, especially prevalent in Case 4, where trust and relationships are established.

On one hand the findings confirm and add to those of Zollo, Reuer and Singh (2002) which affirm that collaborations which have a non-equity structure are less concerned about making room for the needs and wants of all participants, and, or, stakeholders. Therefore, they become more explicit in actions and mechanisms which can have a positive influence on effectiveness when measured, formally or otherwise, against a more specific goal criterion. In contrast however, this research posits that with multi-level goal congruence and an open and democratic social control system, it is possible to have a highly effective collaborative agreement. Thus, while there is evidence to support Zollo, Reuer and Singh (2002), these

findings show it is not necessarily true in each case and that there can be effective learning and outcomes in an equity-based arrangement.

#### 5.1.4.1 Balancing Explorative and Exploitative Behaviours

Exploratory behaviours are more prevalent with goal uncertainty. This can be controlled to an extent by framing the exploration. With more certainty comes more exploitative behaviours; however, it is not so conclusive to equate that tighter social controls result in no exploration or vice versa. With regards to how organisational controls facilitate organisational learning, the findings suggest that having an ideal, or optimum, organisational control level in collaborations, one which supports the spirit of collaboration, also extends to more effective and complex learning (Henri, 2006). It is a paradox that fewer organisational controls open space for creation, while the lack of formal authority is a hindrance to knowledge exploitation (Holmqvist, 2003). However, a balance of organisational controls can negate the two paradoxical extremes.

### 5.1.5 Maintaining the Collaboration

The within case analysis highlighted that perceived success and goals, encompassing the three levels of collaborative, organisational and individual is intertwined with how it learns. Learning adds motivation, becoming almost a goal in itself and therefore adds to perceived value. Offering space for learning, individually, organisationally and collaboratively, is feeding the potential value that participants see in the collaboration; learning from the collaboration and each other is giving value to continued participation and assisting towards achieving collaborative success (Kaplan and Norton, 1992; Davenport 2006; 2010). While those who have engaged in more formal measurements or reviews have been given an opportunity to learn, exploiting the learning opportunities remains challenging (Moxham, 2014). While understanding the barriers to creating a PMM system remain, these findings do aid the understanding of collaborations under certain organisational controls more clearly as called for by Busi and Bititci (2006).

The literature suggests effective action in a collaboration requires complimentary goals, not necessarily joint goals (Bititci *et al.,* 2003; Winkler, 2006). These findings support this assertion and goal interdependence is shown to be the prerequisite for perceptual success and not necessarily explicit joint goals and goal congruence. This extends the view that goal congruence in collaborations is limited, whereas goal diversity and complexity is embedded in the very nature of collaborations (Vangen and Huxham, 2011). Reducing the social control

has been shown to accommodate the hidden agendas (Das and Teng, 1998) and supports goal interdependence. The findings show understanding success can be exclusively perceptual by the organisations or individuals, without a requirement for a shared explicit collaborative success. This seems to be one of the reasons why there was little evidence of recognisable PMM systems in these cases. It may also be due to an absence of strategy (Melnyk *et al.*, 2014) beyond an ideal way in which they wanted to develop their collaborations. However, there are multiple considerations when an organisation engages in a collaboration and there are other barriers to implementing a PMM system. These barriers include resistance from collaborating members and the need to be sensitive to the multiple goals that exist, some of which are intentionally or otherwise hidden. The findings support that goal setting is key for both formal and social controls (Das and Teng, 1998) but these findings are against Papakiriakopoulos and Pramatari (2010) who offer the view that collaborations can begin to measure and understand its success by identifying their shared commonality. This research shows that success, at least in this context, is quite perceptual and subjective; even with increased goal specificity there are those that will not be altogether satisfied with the outputs of the collaboration, for example if they disagree with the approach or other aspects of the focused goal.

Goal specificity makes success easier to define and thus success criteria becomes more specific too. Focusing on an explicit goal, closing resource to other emerging, hidden or side-lined goals, reduces ambiguity of purpose and does seem to have a positive effect on efficiency (Locke and Latham, 1990; Franco-Santos, Lucianetti and Bourne, 2012). Goal specificity along with loose social controls that is quite open to the complex tangled web of goals (Vangen and Huxham, 2011) facilitates a balanced level of explorative and exploitative learning. In contrast, a higher level of goal ambiguity might reduce the possibility of achieving a collaborative goal but can still give satisfactory outputs for collaborators. Although collaborative performance might remain perceptual and subjective, the findings extend understanding of individual and organisational goal commitment behaviours (Webb, 2004; Lau and Sholihin, 2005; Burney and Widener, 2007; Franco-Santos, Lucianetti and Bourne, 2012). They show they can be nurtured through facilitating goal interdependence and exploratory learning. Thus, one key aspect from a management perspective is to know when to focus on balancing goal interdependence with any requirement for goal congruence.
The nature of hidden goals and agendas make it difficult to always know when the individual is achieving their micro-goals, but any sort of positive output of the collaboration aids the

trust building loop (Huxham, 2004), and as such, a perceived equity. Once the rewards of participation are reduced then the individuals can seek retribution through sabotage or exiting the collaboration (Adams, 1965; Franco-Santos, Lucianetti and Bourne, 2012). This begins to press on the other themes of collaborative advantage such as dynamic change (Huxham and Vangen, 2000a; Beech and Huxham, 2003), power (Huxham and Vangen, 2004), and fatigue (Huxham and Vangen, 2000a).

Knowing which set of organisational controls to implement or implementing a preferred control type was challenging. In Case 2, for example, where participants looked to one organisation to take the lead and set the agenda, the lead organisation was trying to implement a completely democratic and equitable structure as it sought purpose and knowledge creation. The Cases are informal inter-organisational settings that do not have a hierarchical structure nor organisational authority (Liu, Borman and Gao, 2014) and demonstrate the resistance and complications involved in managing organisational controls in a collaboration. This is clearly linked to the difficulties in deciding what metrics should be employed to measure any potential outputs (Davis, 2014), which in turn creates barriers to exploiting learning or implementing action; ultimately this makes understanding the value or virtuosity of such action more difficult.

Another aspect that is confirmed in this study are the findings of Bryson, Ackermann and Eden (2016) which observe within collaborations the reluctance to engage in performance measures for aspects that participants do not have full control over, or have a reliance on, the input of others. It helps explain some of the barriers to engaging in more specific, mature and, or, shared technical controls. Findings also point to a difficulty because of the goal web; it is a challenge to have a democratic control system which takes time to develop along with other factors such as trust. As seen in Case 4, trust in the relationship and regular communication channels allow for participatory behaviours and a clearer shared understanding of the common goals (Ates *et al.*, 2013), which in turn support balanced organisational learning behaviours. In contrast, as seen in throughout all the cases, at least for some periods, there exists a suspicion of the unknown intentions of others in the collaboration and consequently negative selfish learning attitudes and power imbalances can be promoted (Inkpen and Beamish, 1997; Hibbert and Huxham, 2005).

This is consistent with goal setting and equity theories (Adams 1965; Franco-Santos, Lucianetti and Bourne, 2012) whereby highlighting perceived injustice in rewards will negatively impact motivation and commitment. Performance indicators, where used, assisted

in knowing when to continue favouring exploitative learning behaviours and when to move to a more explorative stage. Performance indicators also impact success perception, motivation and individual commitment levels. Thus, while the findings suggest that success perception, goal commitment and motivation to the collaboration is increased with a participatory performance system (Webb, 2004; Hall, 2008; Franco-Santos, Lucianetti and Bourne, 2012), there is a lack of conclusive evidence because of the reluctance to engage in a PMM system in the first instance. However, remaining in a particular collaborative control system to include the wants and needs of all individual participants increases the threat of collaborative inertia and consequently collaborative organisational ineffectiveness (Kaplan, 2001). Therefore, the findings suggest a nurturing of the organisational controls requires a balance between motivation and effectiveness. The lifecycle of those five cases show it is possible to change the organisational control structure to assist its survival (Cornforth, Hayes and Vangen, 2014). It adds empirical evidence to and agrees with Vangen, Hayes and Cornforth (2015), that a participative model encourages longer-term commitment. It further develops this by showing that organisational learning types are facilitated through a combination of organisational controls, offering a perceived value in a collaboration which encourages commitment.

The Cases highlighted the value of compatible belief systems, possibly as accountability is vague. Individual value (Bititci *et al*., 2004) is therefore prominent, as is learning in general, through social interaction, which fosters the relationship and interaction value (Parung and Bititci, 2008; Austin and Seitanidi, 2012a; 2012b). An increase in a shared belief and value system among participants probably has an impact on commitment, however offering room for the variety of multi-level goals and success criteria feeds the continued potential collaborative value. This, however, does not guarantee a collaborative meta-goal outcome, rather it ensures perceived valuable outputs. As previously stated in this discussion, valuable collaborative action and success do not require joint goals (Das and Teng, 1998; Bititci *et al.*, 2003; Winkler, 2006). Value from these findings in general support value types found in the literature and does not clearly differentiate between context (Bititci *et al*., 2004; Parung and Bititci, 2008; Austin and Seitanidi, 2012a; 2012b).

### 5.1.6 Discussion Summary

The stories of positive episodes during a collaboration reflect a need for an understanding of the value of the individuals involved, positivity in relationships, creating social connections to encourage opening up, an exchange of ideas, shared meaning and sensemaking (Weick, 1995; Myers and Sacks, 2001; Antonacopoulou, 2006; Antonacopoulou and Chiva, 2007; Hibbert *et al*., 2010). Expressions of satisfaction of these processes in the data show that optimising the social connections increases the potential for learning within a collaborative setting and either increases or maintains the perceived potential collaborative value.

Austin and Seitanidi (2012b) say that value is created through careful design and an organisational fit is a predictor of partnership longevity. While these findings are not rejected (goal interdependence and, or, congruence does feed the potential value) they are shown not to be a pre-requisite; they do not take into consideration the value created through the 'organic' exploratory approach or 'collective' or 'open' leadership. This research was not assessing longevity, but the findings have shown how the collaboration can be maintained through nurturing organisational controls to facilitate organisational learning and multi-level goal engagement. In addition, Austin and Seitanidi (2012b) do not anticipate inertia factors as highlighted by previous theory of collaborative advantage studies, nor the dynamic nature of organisational controls as posited by the findings of this research. These findings extend the understanding of the value for which non-profit organisations participate in voluntary-based informal collaborative arrangements (Gazley, 2008; 2010; Guo and Acar, 2005; Jang, Feiock and Saitgalina, 2016). Through nurturing organisational controls for more effective organisational learning, the collaboration is kept going by maintaining the potential value of the collaboration. Doing so can leverage resource, facilitate knowledge exchange and creation, and manage the compatibility for multiple goal outcomes, many of which are motivated through personal and organisation belief systems; all of which can subsequently increase the longevity of the collaboration.

As previously discussed, these findings about collaborations through an organisational control theory perspective are similar to those in the literature about governance models (Provan and Kenis, 2008; Cornforth, Hayes and Vangen, 2014; Vangen, Hayes and Cornforth, 2015). Loose social controls encourage flexibility and sharing of resource to take action in the overlap and interdependence of individual and organisational goals, but can lack accountability, coordination and a clear joint agenda. Tightening social controls reduces the

influence of multiple stakeholders by limiting the scope of exploration but, by being more focused on a goal, there is likelihood of greater efficiency. However, this research has shown that loose social controls do not create a barrier to joint agendas, equitable influences or efficiency, and posits the possibility of creating an optimum balance of learning and controls which foster the true 'spirit of collaboration.'

## 5.2 Theorising

Understanding that the analyses of a case study is an iterative process during which overall themes, concepts relationships between variables will begin to emerge (Voss, Tsikriktsis and Frohlich, 2002), the discussion of the case findings with the literature directed the researcher back to the data tables to ensure internal validity and establish theory that is a close fit (Section 3.5.3). The first and second set of cross-case matrices were therefore further searched for similar patterns. Further identifying patterns in both sets (using the same colour coding as the cross-case analysis of Section 4.4) the data is unable to distinguish absolutely that organisational learning types, explorative and exploitative, exclusively occur under specific organisational social control settings. Instead it highlights which combinations of social control and goal specificity favour which type of learning, without discounting the ability to engage in the opposite learning type. Thus, a theoretical model begins to emerge with the variables set as social control type and specificity of collaborative success and goal criteria. The cross-case analysis of these a-posteriori colour codes allows for the grouping of 4 distinct collaboration types which can be displayed and categorised through a four-quadrant model (Figure 5:1). These collaboration types have been labelled as:

1. Nebulous
2. Bounded
3. Focused
4. Utopic

| | |
|---|---|
| Q4: Loose Social with Success and Goal Clarity<br><br>Type: Utopic [Spirit of Collaboration] | Q3: Tight Social/Success and Goal Clarity<br><br>Type: Focused [Deterministic] |
| Q1: Loose Social w/ Success and Goal Clouded<br><br>Type: Nebulous [Fledging or Evolving] | Q2: Tight Social/ Success and Goal Clouded<br><br>Type: Bounded [Non-Deterministic] |

**Figure 5:1 Final A-Posteriori Codes**

### 5.2.1 Emerging Model: Development and Refining

In this section the theoretical model is developed in two parts. Firstly, there is a discussion of its validity in the context of the dynamic nature of collaborations and organisational controls as understood in the literature. This incorporates a reflection on both the within case and cross case findings. Secondly, based on Figure 5:1, the movement of each of the five case studies through the model is mapped out (Figure 5:2). A brief reflection on the journey of each case is then offered to validate the model.

The findings show that there are phases of control that the collaboration goes through as it seeks a collaborative advantage, and while acting in 'the spirit of collaboration' might have an optimum balance of controls and learning behaviours, effective controls remain context dependent. Organisational controls are understood to be dynamic (Speckbacher, 2003; Cardinal, Sitkin and Long, 2004; Michelo and Manzoni, 2010) and failure to adjust controls when required will lead to collaborative inertia, thus, the key is to find a balance of controls in the moment (Tessier and Otley, 2012). This leads to effective learning and perceived success and an awareness of ensuing dissatisfactions which can act as a trigger to alter controls. The complexities of collaboration management may act as barriers to moving through phases towards an optimum solution and the case studies demonstrate the resistance and complications involved in managing organisational controls in a collaboration; these are informal inter-organisational settings that do not have a hierarchical structure nor organisational authority (Liu, Borman and Gao, 2014). This can make the flow even from Q1 to Q2 challenging, as witnessed in Case 1. The flow from Q2 to Q1 in Case 2 was also challenging as the participants looked to one organisation to take the lead and set the agenda, where that organisation was trying to implement a completely democratic and equitable structure as it sought purpose and knowledge creation. Difficulties in deciding what metrics should be employed to measure any potential outputs (Davis, 2014) create barriers to exploiting learning or implementing action or to understanding the value or virtuosity of any such action, and thus create in some cases, an inability to move to Qs 3 or 4.

Extending findings of collaborative governance research (Takahashi and Smutny 2002; Cornforth, Hayes and Vangen, 2014; Vangen, Hayes and Cornforth, 2015) this study finds that collaborative organisational controls need to be flexible to the needs of the moment, and therefore flow between areas of exploration and exploitation. In addition, unless there are the established maturity levels, a tightening of social organisational controls is required to ensure

a collective focus where consensus-oriented decisions can be made for the good of the collaboration. This also agrees with findings of Gazley (2010), that the formality of agreements do not have a direct effect on collaborative performance. How a collaboration is performing can be improved through altering the social organisational controls; knowing when to make room for exploration and what boundaries of that exploration should be, before making any decision to focus on a fixed goal. Although possibly effective, an awareness of the potential negative consequences of this action is needed, especially if there is not an overall consensus on goal specificity. Holmqvist (2003) warns against short term or myopic learning and there is a risk of this in Q3 which may bring efficient results but could diminish future collaborative value by closing off learning opportunities or disrupting the relationships within the collaborative network.

Allowing for ambiguity in goals and success criteria, as in Qs 1 and 2, can in effect slow down learning and encourage exploration. Taking time to learn can be beneficial in the longer-term strategy (Porter, 1996) and reduce non-virtuous learning through myopia (Holmqvist, 2009). These cases show that there is a benefit in taking time to build trust and relationships, exploring learning possibilities and allowing for emerging goals; an organic or 'suck it and see' approach. It motivates individuals and organisations to participate and they can achieve value from the learning outputs and other goals at this level. Remaining in a mostly exploratory quadrant however can lead to frustration, inertia and ultimately failure. Likewise learning too quickly, being too keen to exploit the expertise of participants to get the job done as quickly as possible without building trust and understanding of the needs, wants and expectations of all involved, can be damaging and possibly fatal to the collaborative relationship. Taking control and focusing within specific boundaries can alienate one or more participants, which might be a decision worth taking to achieve the collaborative meta-goal.

Research into learning attitudes shows that they are unlikely to be static throughout the lifespan of the collaboration (Hibbert and Huxham, 2005; Huxham and Hibbert, 2008). This dynamism has been seen through the cases in this research where the collaboration begins life in an exploratory stage, searching for purpose, knowledge, ideas, and processes before settling on action in a more exploitative stage. These cases show that avoiding inertia by either concluding action (exploit) or by searching for alternatives and innovation (exploration) requires movement between the quadrants, utilising the diversity that exists

while bringing collaborators to a unity of understanding; either through coercion, Q3, or through the 'spirit of collaboration,' Q4. Extant literature on collaboration highlights the extreme tensions of goal unity versus goal diversity; diversity provides the resources and unity ensures the capacity to use them (Ospina and San-Carranza, 2010; Vangen and Huxham, 2011).

Recognising when to journey from one quadrant to the other helps maintain the collaboration, to keep it going; the threat of inertia increases if a collaboration stays in one quadrant for too long. Even staying in Q4 without reverting to tighter social controls to force through task completion could encourage frustration to creep in or time to elapse. Organisations which only focus in exploitative learning reduce their level of performance (Levinthal and March, 1993) and in collaborations this leads to inevitable inertia. This is evidenced in Case 4 which had successfully completed its first cycle and achieved a collaborative advantage. It completed its collaborative goal in Q3, but the collaboration ceased to exist because it did not move itself back to a more explorative stage. This happened despite the desire of some participants to do so; once successful there is a window of opportunity to re-invent itself. Knowing or recognising when to steer a collaboration from one type to another will likely take experience (Holmqvist, 2004). Recognising the need for exploration may need some trigger, a performance measure for example, and recognising what is useful exploration to be exploited will take careful management.

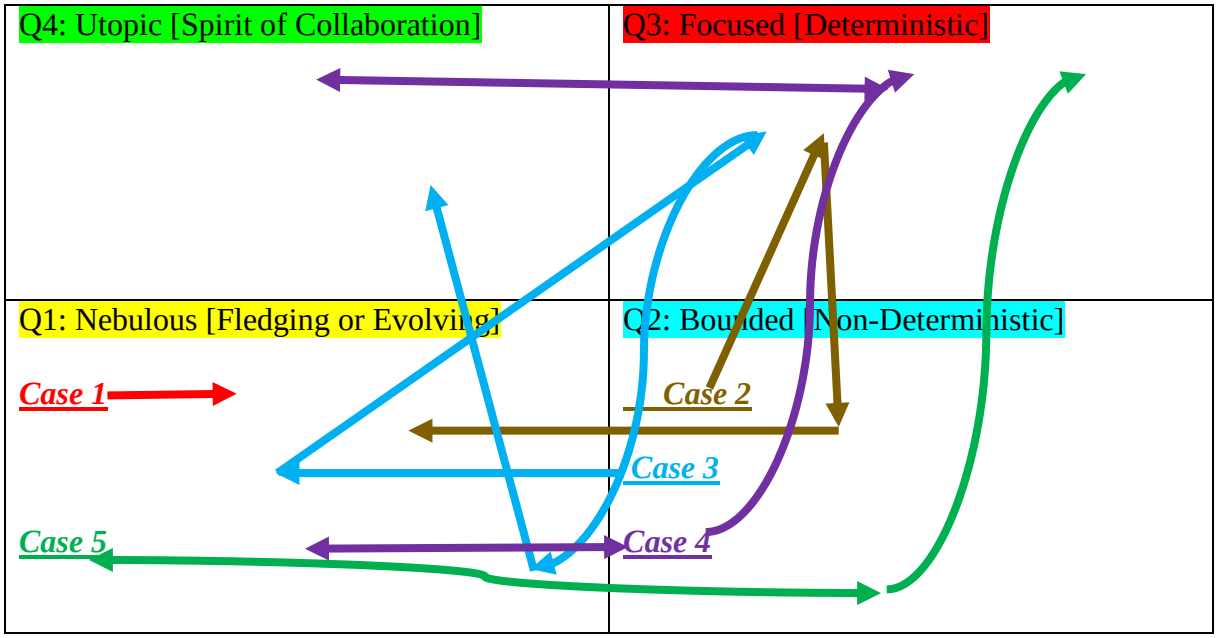


**Figure 5:2 Mapping of Cases onto Theoretical Model**

| Case Number | Quadrant Journey | Summary of Positive Experiences | Summary of Negative Experiences |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Remained in Q1. | Allowed for goal interdependence; Various learning outputs at organisational and individual level; Subjective and personal value creation. | Limited success indicators; Fragmented relationships; Limited goal congruence; Limited explicit and measurable outputs. |
| 2 | Began in Q2;<br>Temporary journey to Q3;<br>Back to Q2;<br>Pushing towards Q1. | Focus on exploratory learning gives an openness to emerging goals and motivates; Engaging in a micro-goal (mock exercise) gave a small win, exploiting learning. | Many goals remain hidden or assumed, lacking measurement to exploit learning; Goal uncertainty threatens inertia. |
| 3 | Generally fluid between Q2 and Q1;<br>Temporary journey into Q3;<br>Maturing towards Q4. | Gives a flexibility to the shared goal by exploring alternatives; Value created in networks and relationships. | Limited explicit success indicators; Unclear accountability leading to periods of inaction. |
| 4 | In 3 stages:<br>1. Started in Q2 with temporary journey to Q1<br>2. Fluid between Q2 and Q3.<br>3. In Q4 before completion in Q3. | Clear vision and focus on end goal;<br>Open, social environment, open to slight shifts in meta-goal;<br>Tightening social controls intermittently, helped focus efforts, exploitation;<br>Q4 balance – clear original and ongoing vision – sense of accountability. Trust in end goal and each other allowed introduction of some technical control. | Required time and dedication, personal drive;<br>Q3 and Q4 friction created – disagreements, unable to appease all;<br>Ending in Q3 – closed to emerging other opportunities. |
| 5 | In 2 stages:<br>1. Started in Q1 with instances of moving to Q2<br>2. Abrupt finish in Q3. | Individual and organisational learning gave success perception;<br>Open to new and emerging ideas;<br>Concluding measurable action 'saving face.' | Ambiguous meta goal leading to lack of exploitation;<br>Too ambitious, lacking small wins;<br>General lack of control, organisational learning and goal nurturing opened threat of inertia. |

**Table 5:1 Summary of Case Journeys**

#### 5.2.1.1 Case 1 KSGC

This case has only lived in Q1. The goals of the collaborators at the organisational and individual level were not clearly aligned but they were compatible. By being so open to facilitating the individual goals of the participating organisations and the individual participants, the majority of whom are volunteers, the collaboration maintains a perception of value for the collaborators. There is little evidence of the group trying to create a collaborative goal that could enable a culture of organisational learning. Having such a culture could allow for management and intervention of organisational controls and nurturing any tensions. This collaboration has therefore, almost paradoxically, maintained a balance of the tensions; with everything being very open and loose, it has created enough collaborative value at an individual and organisational level without knowing how much of it was being fulfilled to call it a collaborative advantage.

#### 5.2.1.2 Case 2 Grey Space

The project is explorative in nature and is trying not to allow itself to be restricted by a specific target. There are emerging issues that are brought to light in the meetings, these are often guided by a set agenda, which is heavily influenced by the chair and the perceived 'lead' organisation, which has an explicit agenda. There is an overarching goal that binds the collaboration, but the group is formed to cater for goals of stakeholders, that is, the needs and goals at an organisational level. There are differing views in how it should be led and controlled, with the perceived lead organisation trying to loosen control and have a highly participative model, but those with less resource and, or, experience looking to them to have the control and to guide the agenda. There is a tension created therefore between Qs 2 and 1 by the resistance to tighter social controls and possible increased objective measurements versus looser social controls with little measurement. The meta-goal is to be ready to react to major incidents that may never happen. It did a mock exercise to test its preparedness. This was led by one of the organisations, an example of temporarily moving to Q3. There was value for some in the exercise, but it was not necessarily universally beneficial and learning from it was unclear, the clarity and focus of action was thus very brief. It is not closed to emerging goals, it is wanting to learn and improve but is lacking an ability to measure and exploit the learning opportunities, perhaps lacking in short-term micro-goals. The purpose and perceived success of the group is in its fluidity, its democracy and its openness, however this opens to threats of drift and ultimately inertia. Continuing in a mostly explorative manner may appease stakeholders for a certain length of time but makes it more challenging to

quantify the value of the outputs or test the virtuosity of any organisational learning opportunities.

#### 5.2.1.3 Case 3 GM5

This case began in Q2, with a relatively strong idea of what it wanted to achieve it knew it needed to seek assistance from its network of partners. With a long-term ambition of lobbying government for a change in child benefit it was able to embrace the diversity of its collaborating partners and seek new ideas and relationships. This case moves between Qs 1, 2 and 3 quite readily and there is evidence that it is maturing into Q4. However, what keeps it going back to tighter social controls is a need for a guiding hand to control and set the agenda. Each individual organisation has limited resource, so the case has periods of drifting where it is not on the radar of the participants and needs that focus to lead and make decisions. It goes through explorative stages of learning, creating a safe informal environment to create and exchange knowledge which then highlights the need to engage in exploitative behaviours. It does not force the group to be fixed on only one possible outcome or an entirely objective sense of success and failure.

#### 5.2.1.4 Case 4 TIOF

This case existed mostly through Qs 2, 3 and 4, with a possible brief foray into Q1 as it sought buy in from other key organisations. The early stages where in Qs 2 and 1 as it established the meta-goal and the partners required to achieve it. Moving to Q3, with a fixed outcome, tightening the social controls and focusing on the performance of the collaboration, led to putting learning into practice. Those individuals who were no longer required or were no longer able to align with the collaborative objectives were left to exit the collaboration. The group would focus on one writing issue and invite an expert to critique on it, to ensure the piece that was written was to the standard expected. Thus, the learning that was created in the sub working groups was exploited fully. Eventually they could do this without so much guidance, under more participatory social controls, in Q4. The tensions created in the differences of opinion were overcome by focusing on the end goal. Pressured by external deadlines and standards, it ended in Q3 with tighter social controls and a focus on progressing towards an end. This caused disagreement in the way progress was measured to satisfy one stakeholder. This disrupted some of the goal alignment, and lead to fears over ‘too much’ or non-virtuous learning. It was effective however in ensuring action was completed by a deadline and the work created met the external quality standards that it targeted.

#### 5.2.1.5 Case 5 Just Faith

This Case showed evidence of going between Q1 and Q2 before finishing in Q3. Much like Case 1 this was a collaboration of organisations that thought they could do something together for the general benefit of their stakeholders, collectively and individually. It lacked a shared understanding of goals, at any level, joint or interdependent. The open and exploratory nature of the collaboration led to implementation of a joint action package but failed to place focus on its success or review its impact or to follow it up. When there was an evaluation carried out the group struggled to exploit any of the report's recommendations. This was hindered by the ambiguity of goals and purpose at any level. It missed co-ordination and was unable to agree on the most suitable control model and was allowed to drift. Eventually, due to dissatisfaction at the outputs, it was decided to concentrate on the fixed outcome of delivering a conference, thus ending in Q3. There was not universal agreement on this final action, yet, given the non-contractual obligation of each of the organisations to continue, value of some sort was maintained throughout the lifespan of the collaboration, expressed mostly in the benefits of learning through social interaction.

### 5.2.2 Theoretical Model

A model of 'organisational learning through organisational controls in collaborations' has emerged from the theorising of the data findings with the extant literature (Figure 5:3). Each quadrant of the model is characterised by a collaboration type. These are then discussed by enfolding them with the extant literature from which new theoretical propositions are established before reviewing the literature-based propositions which directed the research.

Quadrant number 1, "Nebulous" is characterised by explorative learning behaviours. There may be little goal congruence, and the preference is to allow the collaboration to evolve organically with few to no technical controls or performance measures. It thus allows for goal flexibility and fluidity and emerging new goals. There exists a goal interdependence among collaborators and is potentially operated without clear control or leadership. Organisational learning at a collaborative level struggles to develop beyond an explorative stage and thus favours learning at an individual and organisational level.

Quadrant 2, "Bounded" is characterised similarly to quadrant 1, tending to exploratory over exploitative behaviours. The difference is the amount of organisational control exerted which guides the collaboration through the agenda of a determined or perceived lead organisation which reduces openness. There may be an expressed collaborative goal or purpose but how it is to be achieved is yet undetermined. The exploration of learning and goals is done within the boundaries of those in control. It is flexible to the needs and wants of individual participants and organisations but is less accommodating of non-agenda items.

Quadrant 3, "Focused" is characterised by goal specificity and focus on achieving a fixed output or outcome. This can be either an agreed collaborative meta-goal or a temporary micro-goal. Favouring exploitation of learning, collaborations are leader driven, closed in nature to emerging learning or goal opportunities and thus can focus on action.

Quadrant 4, "Utopic" reflects the 'Spirit of Collaboration.' There is an understanding of the meta-goal and purpose of the collaboration with less social control required to achieve them. Trust and relationships have been established and there is multi-level goal congruence and alignment. The combined balance of controls facilitates balanced exploitative and explorative behaviours. While it offers a sense of idealism it may not be the most efficient or effective type.

<table>
<tr><td rowspan="3">Goal and Success Specificity<br>(Technical Control)</td><td>Clarity<br>(Focused)</td><td>Q4: Utopic<br>(Ideal for Cohesivity)<br>  <br>Collaboration Type:<br>Spirit of Collaboration<br>Learning Types:<br>Balanced Explore vs Exploit</td><td>Q3: Focused<br>(Ideal for Concluding;<br>Focus on Action)<br>  <br>Collaboration Type<br>Deterministic<br>Learning Types:<br>Exploitative; Closed</td></tr>
<tr><td>Clouded<br>(Fluid)</td><td>Q1: Nebulous<br>(Ideal for Developing<br>Collaborations)<br>  <br>Collaboration Type:<br>Fledging or Evolving<br>Learning Types<br>“Uncoordinated”<br>Emerging, tacit, exploratory</td><td>Q2: Bounded<br>(Ideal for Overt Agenda)<br>  <br>Collaboration Type<br>Non-Deterministic<br>Learning Types<br>“Coordinated”<br>Bounded - Exploratory</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td colspan="2">Loose | Tight</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td colspan="2">Social Controls</td></tr>
</table>

**Figure 5:3 Model: Organisational Learning through Organisational Controls in Collaborations**

### 5.2.2.1 From Theoretical Model to Theoretical Propositions

In attempting to understand what makes one collaborative relationship more successful than another (Barringer, 2000) this research points to creating a combination of organisational controls which maintain the collaboration in the moment as it explores and ultimately exploits knowledge in an outcome that could be termed as having achieved collaborative advantage (Bryson, Ackermann and Eden, 2016).

The model and subsequent propositions support the learning framework (Figure 2:1) of Holmqvist (2004); exploration (opening-up) and exploitation (focusing). Through nurturing organisational controls in the collaboration those charged with it can avoid learning

competency traps and recognise the moments when slow learning is required (Levitt and March, 1988; Crossan and Berdrow, 2003; Holmqvist, 2003; 2009) and thus be better prepared for a resource intensive process. This is evident in Q1 which facilities the requirements for exploratory behaviours but without coordination struggles to move to exploit these. It can be useful to explore, to break free from past practice and to seek new alternatives (Hobbs and Andersen, 2001), as seen in at least four of the Cases. It offers ownership and the opportunity for an 'organic' growth when creating, thus learning, the what and how of collaborative goals. There is evidence of the need of some authority or guiding leadership to either reduce exploratory behaviour to focus on exploitative action (Q3) or to frame the exploratory behaviour (Q2); the latter (Q2) rejects the notion that tightening the social controls means that embracing exploration and diversification is opposed (Vangen and Winchester, 2014).

Crossan, Lane and White (1999) and Crossan, Maurer and White (2011) conceptualised exploratory and exploitative behaviours as the '4I framework' (Figure 2:2) in a feed-forward, feed-back loop, with four underlying premises: Intuiting (gets an idea) Interpreting (conveys the idea to others) Integrating (puts it into practice) Institutionalising (becomes the norm in the system). While the findings would not be able to categorise each 'I' individually it can be seen that Qs 1 and 2 favour Intuiting and Interpreting, while Q3 favours integrating and evidence of institutionalising is inconclusive. Q4 can facilitate a balance of the full cycle of the '4Is' but much like accommodating multi-level goals and nurturing social controls, the conclusion of this research is that the critical level is whichever combination maintains the collaboration in the moment.

Further to this, the findings support and extend Smith and Bititci's (2017) 'dimensions of organisational control' framework (Figure 2:4) in an informal inter-organisational collaborative setting. Similarly, the model (Figure 5:3) and subsequent theoretical propositions support that, from an organisational control theory lens stance, social and technical controls co-exist and require simultaneous consideration (Cardinal, Sitkin and Long, 2004; Bititci *et al*., 2012; Tessier and Otley, 2012; Liu, Borman and Gao, 2014; Smith and Bititci, 2017). It supports reflective practice whereby the need of the collaboration requires consideration of both social and technical controls to nurture organisational learning and to maintain the potential collaborative value, which may lead to a perpetual rebalancing and evolution of controls (Speckbacher, 2003; Cardinal, Sitkin and Long, 2004; Michelo and Manzoni, 2010). Further to this it allows for management of organisational learning in a

unique context (Crossan and Berdrow, 2003), supporting the need for exploration and co-creation.

As was speculated in the literature when discussing the findings of Liu, Borman and Gao (2014) in Section 2.5.1, from an organisational control lens stance, the technical element of organisational controls has only emerged from the data as goal setting and attainment (success criteria), without detailed accountability. Thus, managing and nurturing technical and social organisational controls aid:

- the working relationship and development of mutual needs and shared values through both substantive and process forms of organisational learning (Propositions 1 – 4)
- the maintenance of the potential value in pursuing a collaborative advantage through reflective management practice (Proposition 5)

1. **When social controls lean toward loose, and the goal and success criteria are clouded:**
    a. **Explorative organisational learning is predominant.**
    b. **The collaboration type is 'Fledging' or 'Evolving.'**

2. **When social controls lean toward tight, and the goal and success criteria are clouded**
    a. **Explorative organisational learning is predominant but bounded.**
    b. **The collaboration type is 'Non-deterministic.'**

3. **When social controls lean towards tight, and the goal and success criteria are clear:**
    a. **Exploitative organisational learning is predominant.**
    b. **The collaboration type is 'Deterministic.'**

4. **When social controls are loose, and the goal and success criteria are clear:**
    a. **Organisational learning flows between exploration and exploitation.**
    b. **The collaboration type is 'Utopic.'**

The preceding four propositions and analysis of the findings lead to the conclusion that the motivation to engage with a collaboration and to continue participation in it, can be nurtured through social organisational controls which enable explorative and exploitative organisational learning behaviours alongside multi-level goal engagement and success criteria. Thus:

**5.1: The potential value of the collaboration can be nurtured through organisational controls which enable explorative and exploitative organisational learning behaviours alongside multi-level goal engagement and success criteria.**

**5.2: Social control emerges as the more significant control in contrast to technical control in keeping the collaboration going and facilitating learning.**

Now that the findings of the cross-case analysis have been established and presented leading to new theoretical propositions, the next section discusses these in relation to the original research question and literature-based propositions.

## *5.3 Literature-Based Proposition Review*

The research question was set out as "How does performance measurement and management impact organisational learning in the development of collaborative advantage?"
This directed a review of the extant literature of the three theoretical bodies that the question combines; performance measurement and management, organisational learning, and collaborative advantage (collaboration theory). This led to five literature-based research propositions [L.B.R.P] being established, (seven in total when including sub propositions) which directed the research, by enabling the identification of suitable case studies, the case study protocol and the semi-structured interview questions. Once the data was analysed these research propositions were revisited to either confirm or reject each one. This is summarised in Table 5:2.

**L.B.R.P. 1 Performance measurement and management facilitate forms of organisational learning within the processes of an inter-organisational collaboration** (Kaplan and Norton, 1992; Kaplan, 2001; Hibbert and Huxham, 2005; Henri, 2006; Franco-Santos *et al.*, 2007; Huxham and Hibbert, 2008; Davenport, Harris and Shapiro, 2010; Melnyk *et al.*, 2014):
The data collected was able to confirm this proposition as expected from the conclusion of the literature review into the roles of performance measurement in inter-organisational collaborations. Where there was evidence of joint performance indicators there followed opportunities for organisational learning; although not all instances of learning were acted upon. The research did raise and highlight some barriers to creating a joint performance measurement and management system which could be investigated further. This leads onto research proposition 2.

**L.B.R.P. 2: Collaborative advantage and, or, inertia can be detected through performance measurement and management of the inter-organisational collaboration**

**outputs which result in an opportunity for organisational learning** (Argyris and Schön, 1978; Argyris, 2002; Melnyk *et al.*, 2014):

This proposition tested against the findings of this research remains inconclusive. While there is no evidence to suggest it is not a positive statement there were not enough instances of collaborative performance measurement to confirm the proposition. Success and value from the cases were quite often viewed subjectively and at the perception of either the individual participant or the individual organisations. Investigating these two research propositions with the evidence across the five cases supports the use of organisational social controls (Performance Management) as more appropriate than organisational technical controls (Performance Measurement) to facilitate organisational learning. Thus, it is posited by the new proposition 5.2: *"Social control emerges as the more significant control in contrast to technical control in keeping the collaboration going and facilitating learning"*

**L.B.R.P. 3.a) Organisational learning that occurs from either the processes of collaboration or the outputs of the collaboration can be applied to assesses the potential value that exists in the collaboration** (Bititci *et al.*, 2004; Parung and Bititci, 2008; El Mokadem, 2010; Austin and Seitanidi, 2012a; 2012b):

There was not a clear pattern across the cases to confirm this proposition therefore it is inconclusive. While learning experiences, knowledge creation and transfer were valued, the role it plays in determining the overall potential value of a collaboration varies. What is learned, how it is learned, and by whom (the collaboration, the organisation or the individual) is a complex picture which may merit further investigation. There are clear instances in the data where individuals point to the knowledge and experiences gained as being valuable and of worth, but how that is measured to assess the overall value and worth that could or does exist within a collaboration is unclear. It is therefore the specificity of proposition 3a that remains inconclusive but combined with the findings directed from investigating research proposition 5 a new theoretical proposition has been posited "New 5.1" (See L.B.R.P 5)

**L.B.R.P. 3.b) Organisational learning that occurs from either the processes of collaboration or the outputs of the collaboration can be applied within the local collaborative context to make necessary adjustments to reduce collaborative inertia** (Hibbert and Huxham, 2005; Huxham and Hibbert, 2008):

This research proposition is confirmed with the analysis of the evidence collated during the data collection process. The key word in the research proposition is 'applied.' The cases

showed that if a collaboration is able to convert learning exploration into learning exploitation then it can reduce the risk of inertia. Further to this the findings from literature that organisational learning requires a balancing of exploitation and exploration is also evident (Levitt and March, 1988; Crossan and Berdrow, 2003; Holmqvist, 2003; 2009). This research proposition does not deny previous findings from the theory of collaborative advantage of the many factors that can trigger collaborative inertia or fatigue (Section 2.3.6) but seeks to confirm the value in facilitating organisational learning in the search for collaborative advantage. In light of this search into organisational learning in inter-organisational collaborations and the role of performance measurement and management plays in facilitating it, the theoretical model and propositions "New 1,2,3 and 4" have emerged.

**L.B.R.P. 4.a) Organisational learning that occurs from either the processes of collaboration or the outputs of the collaboration can be transferred to an individual organisation from the current context, ready to be applied in a different collaborative context** (Zollo, Reuer and Singh, 2002; Hibbert and Huxham, 2005; Bititci *et al*., 2007; Holmqvist, 2009; El Mokadem, 2010):

**L.B.R.P. 4.b) Organisational learning that occurs from either the processes of collaboration or the outputs of the collaboration can be transferred to an individual organisation as knowledge to be applied to any context** (Holmqvist, 2003; 2004; 2009; Hibbert and Huxham, 2005):

Both sections of L.B.R.P four remain inconclusive. Transferable process learning alongside general experiential was highlighted in the data analysis, more specifically during the within case analysis. While looking at each collaboration the types of learning outcomes achieved (Huxham and Hibbert, 2004) are found to be influenced by the control types; social and technical. While transferable learning (Hibbert and Huxham, 2005) is expressed, the findings show it is heavily based on individual organisational absorptive capacity, such as dissemination processes at the organisational level. Transferable process learning, otherwise referred to as experiential learning, does occur throughout the four identified collaboration types of the theoretical model but remains an unknown factor as it relies on the participating organisations absorptive capacity. Therefore, both aspects of research proposition four

require further investigation; there were no additional way of confirming, rejecting or extending this through the study findings.

**L.B.R. P. 5) If the potential collaborative value is deemed unsatisfactory to a participating organisation it will choose to exit; if satisfactory it will proceed to collaborate** (Bititci *et al.*, 2004; Huxham and Vangen, 2005; Huxham and Hibbert, 2008; El Mokadem, 2010; Austin and Seitanidi, 2012a; 2012b; Jang, Feiock and Saitgalina, 2016): This proposition is confirmed. Regardless of antecedent, the informal nature of the collaborations allowed individuals or organisations to exit the collaboration if they deemed the potential value to be unworthy of continued resource. The findings that were found regarding the potential value, the reasons for collaborating alongside those of research proposition 3(a), and the role that organisational learning plays in the potential value, proposition "New 5.1" emerged: *"The potential value of the collaboration can be nurtured through organisational controls which enable explorative and exploitative organisational learning behaviours alongside multi-level goal engagement and success criteria."*

| | Literature-Based Research Proposition | Reference | Findings | Emerging New Proposition |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Performance measurement and management facilitate forms of organisational learning within the processes of an inter-organisational collaboration. | Kaplan and Norton, 1992; Kaplan, 2001; Hibbert and Huxham, 2005; Henri, 2006; Franco-Santos *et al.*, 2007; Huxham and Hibbert, 2008; Davenport, Harris and Shapiro, 2010; Melnyk *et al.*, 2014. | Confirmed – although evidence supports the use of organisational social controls (Performance Management) as more appropriate than organisational technical controls (Performance Measurement) to facilitate organisational learning. | "New 5.2" Social control emerges as the more significant control in contrast to technical control in keeping the collaboration going and facilitating learning. |
| 2 | Collaborative advantage and, or, inertia can be detected through performance measurement of the inter-organisational collaboration outputs which result in an opportunity for organisational learning. | Argyris and Schön, 1978; Argyris, 2002; Melnyk *et al.*, 2014. | Inconclusive – there were not enough instances of collaborative performance measurement to confirm the proposition. | "New 5.2" Social control emerges as the more significant control in contrast to technical control in keeping the collaboration going and facilitating learning. |
| 3 | Organisational learning that occurs from either the processes of collaboration or the outputs of the collaboration can be applied:<br>a) To assess the potential value that exists in the collaboration. | Bititci *et al.*, 2004; Parung and Bititci, 2008; El Mokadem, 2010; Austin and Seitanidi, 2012a; 2012b. | Inconclusive – while learning experiences, knowledge creation and transfer were valued, the role it plays in the overall potential value of a collaboration varies. | Specificity of proposition 3a is inconclusive but combined with 5 proposition "New 5.1" has emerged. |
| | b) Within the local collaborative context to make necessary adjustments to reduce collaborative inertia. | Hibbert and Huxham, 2005; Huxham and Hibbert, 2008. | Confirmed – the ability to exploit any explorative learning reduced the risk of inertia. | Emerging from the cases is the theoretical model and propositions "New 1,2,3 and 4." |
| 4 | a) Organisational learning that occurs from either the processes of collaboration or the outputs of the collaboration can be transferred to an individual organisation from the current context, ready to be applied in a different collaborative context. | Zollo, Reuer and Singh, 2002; Hibbert and Huxham, 2005; Bititci *et al.*, 2007; Holmqvist, 2009; El Mokadem, 2010. | Inconclusive – While there is evidence to support that this proposition is factual, there are barriers to achieving this related to dissemination of learning and absorptive capacity at an organisational level. | Requires further investigation. |
| | b) Organisational learning that occurs from either the processes of collaboration or the outputs of the collaboration can be transferred to an individual organisation as knowledge to be applied to any context. | Holmqvist, 2003; 2004; 2009; Hibbert and Huxham, 2005. | Inconclusive – While there is evidence to support that this proposition is factual, there are barriers to achieving this related to dissemination of learning and absorptive capacity at an organisational level. | Requires further investigation. |
| 5 | If the potential collaborative value is deemed unsatisfactory to a participating organisation it will choose to exit; if satisfactory it will proceed to collaborate. | Bititci *et al.*, 2004; Huxham and Vangen, 2005; Huxham and Hibbert, 2008; El Mokadem, 2010; Austin and Seitanidi, 2012a; 2012b; Jang, Feiock and Saitgalina, 2016. | Confirmed – regardless of antecedent, the informal nature of the collaborations allowed individuals or organisations to exit the collaboration if they deemed the potential value to be unworthy of continued resource. | "New 5.1" The potential value of the collaboration can be nurtured through organisational controls which enable explorative and exploitative organisational learning behaviours alongside multi-level goal engagement and success criteria. |

**Table 5:2 Literature-Based Research Propositions Review**

| Proposition (N=New; C= Confirmed) | Theoretical Proposition |
|---|---|
| N 1 | When social controls lean toward loose, and the goal and success criteria are clouded:<br>a. Explorative organisational learning is predominant.<br>b. The collaboration type is 'Fledging' or 'Evolving. |
| | |
| N 2 | When social controls lean toward tight, and the goal and success criteria are clouded:<br>a. Explorative organisational learning is predominant but bounded.<br>b. The collaboration type is 'Non-deterministic.' |
| | |
| N 3 | When social controls lean towards tight, and the goal and success criteria are clear:<br>a. Exploitative organisational learning is predominant.<br>b. The collaboration type is 'Deterministic.' |
| | |
| N 4 | When social controls lean towards loose, and the goal and success criteria are clear:<br>a. Organisational learning flows between exploration and exploitation.<br>b. The collaboration type is 'Utopic.' |
| | |
| N 5.1 | The potential value of the collaboration can be nurtured through organisational controls which enable explorative and exploitative organisational learning behaviours alongside multi-level goal engagement and success criteria. |
| N 5.2 | Social control emerges as the more significant control in contrast to technical control in keeping the collaboration going and facilitating learning. |
| | |
| C 1 | Performance measurement and management facilitates forms of organisational learning within the processes of an inter-organisational collaboration. |
| C 3 | Organisational learning that occurs from either the processes of collaboration or the outputs of the collaboration can be exploited within the local collaborative context to make necessary adjustments to reduce collaborative inertia. |
| C 5 | If the potential collaborative value is deemed unsatisfactory to a participating organisation it will choose to exit; if satisfactory it will proceed to collaborate. |

**Table 5:3 Final Theoretical Propositions**

# 6 Conclusion

This chapter draws the thesis to a conclusion by reviewing the research aim and objectives before explaining the contribution to theory, context and management practice. This is followed by a reflection on the limitations of the research and signposts to further research opportunities before offering a personal reflection on the thesis.

## *6.1 Review: Aim; Question; Objectives*

The research presented four objectives (Section 1.3) which were based on designing the study, data collection and analysis and finally, theorisation of the findings. Together the completed objectives underpin the overarching aim of the research and answer the research question "How does performance measurement and management impact organisational learning in the development of collaborative advantage?"

Chapter 1 introduces the researcher's industry experience of working in inter-organisational collaborations. In general, they were resource intensive and did not always offer a satisfactory return on investment of resource. A study was designed to better understand how learning occurs in these joint ventures so to add to the body of literature that has sought to explain the phenomena that are present within them. This began with a review of the literatures of collaborative advantage theory, organisational learning theory before finally exploring performance measurement and management [PMM] and the role it might play in enabling learning, primarily through an organisational control theory lens. Next, the research paradigm and methodological choice of a multi-case study approach was justified in Chapter 3. Five cases were selected, and a protocol was created for data gathering. Questions for the semi-structured interviews were developed from both the research question and the literature-based research propositions. The data was formatted for within case analysis, during which, themes of aspirations, visions, missions and purpose (collectively, 'goals') presented strongly in the mechanism of the relationship between organisational learning and PMM. Chapter 5 concludes with a theoretical model and propositions after a discussion of the cross-case findings with those of the literature review. These serve to answer the research question, concluding that organisational controls play a role in facilitating learning with social controls emerging as the more significant control. **Thus, the potential value of the collaboration can be nurtured by using these controls to enable explorative and exploitative organisational learning and is visualised in the proposed theoretical model (Figure 5:3).**

## 6.2 Contributions

This thesis contributes to theory, to practice and to context. Each of these three distinct contributions are explained in this section.

### 6.2.1 Theoretical

The findings have enabled a theoretical explanation of the impact of organisational controls on organisational learning in collaborations. This phenomenon has not previously been articulated in this way and lacked empirical evidence to support any previously implied assumptions. Through the combination of the theories of collaborative advantage, organisational control and organisational learning along with empirical research three theoretical contributions can be offered.

Firstly, from the perspective of the theory of collaborative advantage, in which collaborations are understood to be tension ridden and presented as paradoxical in the literature, this research draws attention to the 'efficiency and inclusiveness' tension (Vangen, Hayes and Cornforth, 2015). This tension requires simultaneous management of both social and technical controls; finding the appropriate balance between open and inclusive exploratory learning and multi-goal engagement and the creation of a structure tight enough to offer consensus-oriented decision making for learning exploitation and goal specificity. The correct balance of social control against goal specificity allows for management of organisational learning in a unique context (Crossan and Berdrow, 2003), supporting the need for explorative and exploitative learning behaviours (Holmqvist, 2004; Crossan, Maurer and White, 2011). It has been shown therefore that a collaboration requires consideration of both social and technical controls to nurture organisational learning in the pursuit of value and collaborative advantage. From an organisational learning perspective, the theoretical contribution has highlighted the conditions which allow for exploratory and exploitative learning behaviours to co-exist within an inter-organisational collaboration. This is more strongly associated with both substantive learning and process learning forms. While transferable and experiential learning are intertwined with these other learning forms, exploitation of it is reliant on external conditions of the individual participating organisation. Thus, while this type of learning can go through its exploratory phase of creation and, or transfer, its impact and virtuosity is dependent upon the environment beyond the boundaries of the collaboration.

Secondly, the findings of the research have enabled the creation of a theoretical model of organisational learning in collaborations (Section 5.2.2). This model, alongside its supporting propositions, adds to the theoretical contribution of the thesis and allows for the identification and explanation of how the specificity of goals and nature of social organisational controls shape both the nature of the collaboration and of learning therein while working towards a collaborative advantage. It visualises these findings and offers four types of collaboration which are characterised by social controls, goal specificity and organisational learning behaviours. The model firstly offers explanation of two extremities of organisational control and the impact on organisational learning behaviour. It does this by illustrating that as social controls become tighter (less participative) and goal specificity increases, the dominant organisational learning behaviour is exploitative. Conversely, it illustrates that as social controls become looser (more participative) and goal specificity decreases, the dominant organisational learning behaviour is explorative. These extremities are shown in quadrants 1 and 3 of the model (Figure 5:3); loose social controls with an emerging and organic learning process versus tighter social controls with more objective goals and measurable outputs with ways to exploit learning opportunities. However, the findings of this research have demonstrated a more complex triangular relationship between social controls, goal specificity and learning behaviours. The clarity and specificity of goals and success criteria (which covers aspirations, visions, missions and purpose) impact on how the social control shapes the dominant learning behaviour. This more nuanced relationship is illustrated by quadrants 2 and 4 of the model, showing that tensions created within these theoretical themes do not only sit between two paradoxical extremities, and are instead shaped by a more multifarious causality.

Finally, in addition to the theoretical extension of collaboration theory as set out in the initial research question, the thesis has addressed a call in the field of performance measurement and management for research in different contexts (Franco-Santos, Lucianetti and Bourne, 2012; Melnyk *et al*., 2014). Performance frameworks in the literature tend to concern themselves with the single organisation (Bititci *et al.*, 2012). The literature highlights the difficulties of designing an effective PMM system when the context becomes inter-organisational, either in dyadic relationships, or as in this research, complex inter-organisational relationships (Davis, 2014; Liu, Borman and Gao, 2014). While being able to confirm that performance measurement and management facilitates forms of organisational learning within the processes of an inter-organisational collaboration, the barriers to creating

a joint performance measurement and management system in such ventures remain. However, **through the application of an organisational control lens to the study, the theoretical contribution has further illuminated the understanding of the effects of organisational controls, in particular social controls, on organisational learning within collaborations**. Through this theoretical understanding and development of the process characteristics involved in organisational control, a step is taken towards being able to tackle the multiple barriers that exist during the creation of a collaborative PMM system (Busi and Bititci, 2006; Smith and Bititci, 2017). In addition to this, the theoretical model created (Figure 5:3) visualises the role of goal specificity alongside social controls. Goal setting can be regarded as a technical control, but in combination with collaborative advantage theory, which broadly defines the term to include aspirations, visions, missions and purpose, it offers new insight into how a collaboration can manage 'organisational alignment' (Melnyk *et al.*, 2014) whereby goals are inherently complex, multi-layered and often assumed or hidden. **The effects on organisational learning behaviours are thus explained through the social control settings and the specificity of goal and, by extension, success criteria**. The findings presented here have assisted in furthering the understanding of collaboration and its mechanisms, offering insight into how multi-level goal engagement can be nurtured (Bruce, Leverick and Littler, 1995; Wognum and Faber, 2002; Bititci *et al*., 2003; Barratt, 2004; Busi and Bititci, 2006) which in turn will help others to develop a performance management process for collaborations. It does not claim to have solved the many challenges of managing and measuring performance or the translation of intra-organisational controls to an inter-organisational setting (Papakiriakopoulos and Pramatarim, 2010; Bititci *et al*., 2012; Davis, 2014; Liu, Borman and Gao, 2014), however, it contributes to the knowledge of tensions that exists in multi-stakeholder collaborations with the varying expectations and definitions of what success looks like.

Thus, it is concluded that three theoretical contributions are made in this thesis:

1. **It extends collaboration theory by explaining how different organisational controls (from organisational control theory) impact on organisational learning, illustrating that explorative and exploitative learning behaviours are influenced by the combination of social control type and goal specificity. How these combinations impact on organisational learning in collaborations are explained through four theoretical propositions** (Table 5:3, N1 – N4). It achieves this by taking the theme of goals from the theory of collaborative advantage (Vangen and Huxham, 2011; Bryson, Ackermann and Eden, 2016) and combining it with explorative and exploitative learning behaviours from inter-organisational learning theory (Holmqvist, 2003; 2004; Crossan, Maurer and White, 2011) in the five case studies. All the case studies highlight that social control types alongside goal specificity impact the dominant learning behaviour type and thus we can say that the application of organisational control theory to theme of goals in the theory of collaborative advantage explains how organisational learning takes place.

2. **A theoretical model of 'organisational learning through organisational controls in collaborations' is proposed (Figure 5:3). This visualises how combinations of social organisational control with goal and success specificity impact on organisational learning behaviours throughout the lifecycle of an inter-organisational collaboration.** This was achieved through theorising the data findings, enfolding them with the extant literature. Each quadrant of the model is characterised by a collaboration type and are supported by theoretical propositions (Table 5:3).

3. **The extension of organisational control theory by explaining the effects the different types of control have, highlighting that social controls play a more prominent role than technical controls in the facilitation of organisational learning in collaborations**. This is exemplified in the application of performance management over performance measurement as the dominant control type (Smith and Bititci, 2017) in the role of explorative and exploitative learning behaviours (Holmqvist, 2003; 2004; Crossan, Maurer and White, 2011) as found in the studied cases of inter-organisational collaborations.

Through a combination of three different bodies of literature knowledge, not only has a theoretical gap been found, but it has been answered through empirical evidence and a discussion in relation to the multiple themes of inter-organisational working. Explaining the findings in such a way alongside the creation of a theoretical model has further enhanced the understanding of the effects that organisational controls have on organisational learning in the dynamic, tension fraught nature of inter-organisational collaborations. As demonstrated in the following sections, the model can be offered as a management tool in practice and underpins a contextual contribution of the study.

### 6.2.2 Practical

For the theory to be relevant to practice, it needs to connect with the individuals involved in collaborative work (Vangen and Huxham, 1997; Vangen and Diamond, 2016). It is put forward by this research that the findings, more specifically the proposed model and subsequent propositions, contribute to the management practice of inter-organisational collaborations in three distinct ways, each of which is developed in this section. By offering practitioners an explanation of the casual mechanisms in play during the lifecycle of a collaboration managers might be able to improve on existing decision making. Thus, they can begin to moderate for possible tensions at the earliest opportunity to maintain the potential collaborative value.

**1. The model allows those taking part in an informal collaboration to depict the various stages of the process.**

Using the theoretical model and explanation of what occurs in each quadrant, practitioners can visualise and better reflect on their own collaborations. The dynamic and fluid nature of collaborations is reflected in a management need to ensure the correct balance of organisational controls when focusing on facilitating organisational learning behaviours and goal setting. This nature makes it unlikely, although not impossible, that collaborations will follow a linear process of A to B to C through its lifecycle, rather they will reflect the type of social controls employed and the level of goal and success in that isolated moment.

Due to fluidity and tensions created through diversity in collaborations management prescriptions in collaborations can be contrary, even paradoxical in nature. Offering a visual explanation of the interplay of organisational controls, goal specificity and learning can

reduce the challenges posed when presented with the dilemma of using tighter or looser social controls, or balancing learning which favours exploratory over exploitative behaviours. Employing the model can allow managers to recognise the stage of collaboration they are presented with and assist with decision making that best fits the current need. To enhance this contribution, Section 5.2 discusses the dynamic nature of organisational controls reflected in the findings of this research alongside each of the case studies. This shows how they moved through the model (Figure 5:3) or settled in one particular quadrant of it.

**2. The model visualises the tensions that exist between organisational controls and goal specificity; explaining how these affect the balance of organisational learning that occurs.**

The need to motivate participation in these informal, not for profit, collaborations has uncovered the juxtaposition of extremes of loose and tight social controls; whereby it can be argued for both the necessity of defined or bounded collaborative purpose and the necessity to allow an organic growth of emergent outputs. The tensions between these extremes are felt when more or less space is given to the multitude of existing goals, which desire either a more explorative or more exploitative type of organisational learning behaviour.

**3. The model can be used as a tool to engage in reflective practice:**

- **I. by recognising what is currently happening to a collaboration in which it is involved, thus legitimising any pain felt by the process;**
- **II. to offer insight into satisfaction indicators of participants;**
- **III. where possible, to guide their own collaboration to fit a type when considering these themes in isolation or alongside the other factors of the internal and external environments.**

This emphasis on reflective management practice in the contribution from the research findings is in keeping with the practice-oriented style of collaborative advantage theory; descriptions of the multiple themes that coexist in a collaboration act as a mirror of the collaboration. In this way collaborative advantage theory aims to assist managers in justifying the pain they suffer when faced with dilemmas or even multi-lemmas. Through an awareness that organisational learning behaviours and the 'tangled-web' of goals that exist in a collaboration are both facilitated and hampered by social controls, managers can understand that there is not one prescribed way to best facilitate such actions in practice. Managers being

able to embrace a realism of their collaboration over an idealism helps to temper expectations.

This management contribution can also aid the achievement of individual or organisational goals within a collaboration, which is one way of reaching what has been described as a collaborative advantage, achieving something that is not possible as a single organisation. Goals can be known from the outset or emerge from explorative organisational learning opportunities that occur during the life span of a collaboration. Success is not readily definable by achieving the agreed collaborative, or meta, goal of the project. The complexity and variety that exists within the "tangled-web" of goals and goal setting is evident across all levels and perspectives. These include goals of the collaborating organisations and the individual goals of those who are representing them. They are a mixture of both the explicit and tacit, therefore questions remain about what is to be measured and how? How is success measured? Knowing which types of collaborations favour individual aims versus types which are more focused on the collaborative aim can offer insight into the satisfaction or frustration being experienced by participants.

The model can be used to steer one's own collaboration to fit the most appropriate collaborative type when considering the stage of its lifecycle alongside the other factors of the internal and external environments. Engaging in one mode of social control might be seen in any given instance as a balance of the current needs of the collaboration's stakeholders. The participants may have contrasting needs or priorities during the collaboration that require contrasting action. The model enables managers to recognise that tending towards either looser or tighter social controls could be presented as simultaneously valid positions when attempting to ensure satisfaction to all parties. It is unlikely that any prescription of looser of tighter social controls will be evidently weaker or stronger, so while benefit might be gained in a balanced intermediate position this would only be achieved through reflective management practice in context.

### 6.2.3 Contextual

The development of the theory of collaborative advantage was not bounded by the context of the inter-organisational collaborative type, and the examples which informed its creation came from a wide selection of public, private and third sector organisations (Huxham and Vangen, 2005). The three bodies of literature utilised and reviewed in this research used a variety of collaborative contexts including intra-organisational settings. There was not a clear and obvious contextual difference highlighted although there seems to be a lesser use of inter-organisational complex collaborations in studies focusing on organisational controls and inter-organisational learning, especially not-for-profit examples. The tendency of recent studies into management of collaborations has been to focus on not-for-profit management (See: Stone, Crosby and Bryson, 2010; Vangen and Huxham, 2012; Vangen and Winchester, 2013; Vangen, Hayes and Cornforth, 2015; Bryson, Ackermann and Eden, 2016). While much has been done on inter-organisational learning, the vast majority of research into organisational learning within collaborations has used the private-sector as its context (Rashman, Withers and Hartley, 2009) and this research has managed to offer the field a different perspective by using exclusively collaborations constituted by not-for-profit organisations. This, alongside the researcher's personal experience, influenced the decision to use a not-for-profit context. In general, studies on informal collaborations are limited (Gazley, 2008; 2010; Guo and Acar, 2005; Jang, Feiock and Saitgalina, 2016) therefore the explicit nature of this context contributes to the overall understanding of collaborations in these fields, to both researchers and practitioners alike.

The research shows that not all not-for-profit collaborations are top-down imposed formal arrangements and raises awareness that value in the context is not necessarily explicit or measurable; with the absence of contractual obligation, there is the need to motivate key contributors. It has been argued by Thomson, Perry and Miller (2009, p. 52) that an empirically validated theory of collaboration demands a systematic approach toward understanding the meaning and measurement of collaboration to avoid the evaluation of collaborative arrangements being reliant on 'inconsistent subjective judgments of evaluators.' This research however posits that value, purpose and reasons for collaborating are not inherently, nor are they required to be, universally shared. The informal not-for profit context of the cases studied here offer little appetite for strong accountability-based management, preferring to use social over technical controls to nurture learning and to offer an awareness of the multiple tensions that exist in a collaborative setting.

**A contextual contribution has thus been made to the field by demonstrating that informal, not-for-profit, collaborations can create a variety of mutual benefits through careful management of social controls and goal criteria.** Application of the theoretical model created by this research (Section 5.2.2) is a visual tool from which the contextual contribution of the thesis is made, demonstrating how the specificity of goals and nature of social organisational controls shape both the nature of the collaboration and of learning therein. The often clouded and uncertain nature of these collaborations could be one of the reasons for not creating an effective performance system (Speklé and Verbeeten, 2014) but it does highlight the requirement for organisational controls to be continuously and purposefully nurtured (de Waal, Goedegebuure and Geradts, 2011; Moxham, 2014) to maintain value through flexible goal attainment and learning.

## 6.3 Limitations

Having completed the study and presented the findings and overall contributions the researcher can now reflect on concerns over delimitations of the work.

This research is in fulfilment of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in management, which requires it to be undertaken as an individual project and there is an expectation of how long it should take from commencement to fulfilment. In developing the study therefore, the management of three key areas of resource was crucial; time, human and financial. It proved a challenge to gain access to five cases which suited the criteria in the allotted timeframe, approximately a period of 12 to 18 months for this full-time study of 36 to 48 months. Access needed to be negotiated with the custodians of the collaboration in the first instance, before further individual agreement from the individual participating organisations to partake in interviews and other data gathering. As a result, the five cases that access was gained all have a Scottish focus. Although one can presume that collaborations do not only happen in this regionalised geographical setting, it was felt that this shared geographical nature location could provide theoretical replication. Given the geographical setting, the not-for-profit collaborations selected as cases were created with a Judaeo-Christian perception of ethics; a western European mindset. Thus, the findings do not take into account any potential differences that may be discovered in cross-cultural exploration such as an Islamic or Oriental centred philosophical outlook. However, these factors enabled the researcher to frequently visit the case studies, carrying out observations where possible and to build a personal rapport with the participants. This, coupled with personal knowledge and experience in the field, enabled the researcher to develop credibility with the individuals, leading to much deeper insights than would have been otherwise possible.

The study is qualitative and therefore there is a risk of personal bias. With reference to Chapter 1, the researcher came into the study with personal industry experience of both collaborative success and failure, and therefore an expectation of how these types of collaborations are treated by individuals and organisations when it is not entirely clear what the personal or organisational benefit will be. Although subjectivity is an advantage to qualitative research, it is important to reduce bias to maximise the validity of the conclusions reached. This was partly achieved by using a case study protocol in the research design to ensure repeatability and reliability. Avoiding collaborations that directly involved the tourism industry and any previous working relationship reduced the risk of personal bias affecting the

research process. However, as previously stated, having some previous knowledge and understanding of the phenomena present in collaborations in a 'real-world' situation enabled a rapport to be built quickly with participants and led to greater insights during the data gathering and analysis process. The protocol also assisted in reducing bias from the interpretation of data, gathering and analysing from multiple sources; interviews, documents, archives, desk research and, where possible, direct observations. Overtly displaying data on matrices allowed for pattern matching and thus a systematic approach to data analysis was achieved.

The philosophical stance underpinning the research is one of critical realism, whereby knowledge of real-world mechanisms is not given claims of infallibility given the subjective nature by which it is accessed. The choice of methodology might be argued by some to be too closed to the ethnographical nuances that a grounded theory or similar interpretivist approach may have offered. In contrast a more objective 'positivistic' approach, or purely deductive approach, may have given clearer focus to confirmation or falsification of the literature-based research propositions. Also discussed was the option of action research, which may have allowed for the creation of performance systems as modes of interventions in one or more cases. The approach adopted however allowed for reliability and repeatability across each of the cases studied. It leant to the creation of a case study protocol which allowed the research to focus on the phenomena in question without being closed off to other possible explanations for the causal mechanisms at play. The overt arrangement and display of the data not only allowed some of the a-priori knowledge and coding to be tested but enabled the emergence of a new theoretical understanding. In other words, having a deductive cycle of data analysis helped to identify the phenomenon of interest, linking it with previous research and literature, before induction provided the events that required explanation. These explanations 'invoke causal language and the identification of mechanisms and offer the data collected as evidence' (Easton, 2010, p. 124).

Finally, while the informal, not-for-profit, context of the study has been justified in the study as offering valid empirical data for theorising, it might be argued that the results are only explicit in application to this context. However, the study did not uncover significant contextual differences from extant literature nor in theory development. Added to the careful selection of case study collaborations and the employment of replication logic this potential criticism is thus negated.

## 6.4 Future Research

This section offers a path for future research given the overall contribution that has been discussed above. Future research could test the propositions in other collaborative settings; engage in longitudinal studies to research the lifespan of a collaboration from conception to completion or use other research techniques. Given the context specific nature of each case study there could be theoretical and practical value in testing the propositions against a variety of alternative collaboration types, for example where a project is limited by fixed costs or time. Collecting empirical evidence from different contextual relationships in for-profit and not-for-profit settings could confirm or extend the findings posited by this study. Other techniques could involve action research or a wider quantitative study to measure the strength in relationship between the discussed contingent factors; organisational control, organisational learning and goals. Action research could create interventions designed to test the theoretical model and its propositions, searching for deeper explanations of the phenomena. Alternatively, using these findings as hypothesis, a purely deductive research approach could be used, possibly but not necessarily using quantitative methods. Such a study should confirm these findings but the change in approach might lead to alternative explanations and understanding.

The line of enquiry is ready to move on using this context of informal not-for-profit collaborations. Collaborations in this context do exist under fluid organisational controls; the deconstruction of each of the theoretical model's quadrants, and by extension their related propositions, will bring further understand the tensions that exists under different control modes. For example, relationships in the cases of this study appear to be under threat in more extreme modes. Similarly, an application of a different theoretical lens to the theoretical model could expand the knowledge of the phenomena in question. These should lead to a better understanding of the barriers to, and enablers of, organisational learning and value creation in collaborative working and assist in reducing the risk of collaborative inertia. Knowing more of how collaborations learn during their life cycle would be of great benefit to disentangle the barriers to continued collaborative improvement and maturity. This refers back to the conceptual model (Figure 2:3) of this research and to the unconfirmed research propositions (Table 5:2) and leads to the need of a follow up a study to measure collaborative maturity in the individual organisation. These findings uncover the disconnection between the virtual collaborative organisation and the individual collaborating organisations of transferable and experiential learning, therefore the dissemination that occurs from the collaboration require further investigation. While there is a body of literature that does

investigate the phenomena of knowledge transfer, there is more to be understood how individuals and organisations are able to learn from one collaborative context and apply it to another. The data collected here points to the possibility of increasing an individual's and organisation's collaborative 'know -how', a kind of collaborative maturity; knowing if and how this is enabled, either through PMM or another function, may enlighten the general understanding of the potential value which exists in collaborative working. Thus it is proposed that a longitudinal study, focusing on one organisation as it engages with collaborative projects, would offer insight into how it learns through time, if there is learning from success and failure and how this knowledge is codified for future use.

In addition to this, there is evidence in this study of collaborative value through goal interdependence and not simply goal congruence, pointing at collaborative advantage taking various forms and meaning for the multiple stakeholders involved. The matrix offered by this research therefore questions the meaning of "collaborative advantage". Can it not be to the satisfaction of interdependent success if not a shared outcome? The answer may be to agree on collaborative purpose which could aim for interdependence or congruence. This calls for research on how organisations can gauge the potential value of a collaboration, and how its outputs can be transformed into capital. An equitably structured informal collaboration may not return equitable gain which raises questions over how collaboratively mature and immature organisations, or organisations with substantial differences in resource, work together in these settings. How does the membership make-up of a multi-organisational collaboration relate with the four collaboration types identified in the theoretical matrix?

From an operations management perspective, the findings of this research show that social controls have a greater impact upon organisational learning behaviours than technical controls do. The matrix and subsequent propositions demonstrate the complex nature of the relationship between social controls, organisational learning behaviours and goal and success specificity in a collaboration, thus the key theoretical implication is that future research into performance measurement and management should consider the interaction and relationship between these concepts. Questions remain over regarding the barriers to enabling a joint performance measurement and management system in a collaborative setting. The literature review highlighted this as a gap in knowledge and the empirical findings of this study, while not conclusive enough, give rise to some of these barriers. Challenges of accountability, overt joint goals and tensions in how the collaboration should be managed are some examples. Further study on the role of PMM in collaborations could also uncover more of the role played by technical controls in these types of collaborations. Perhaps only once these factors

are better understood could a meaningful joint PMM system be implemented and tested for its effects on efficiency and effectiveness. As such therefore, question remain around the creation and role of a collaborative PMM system.

Finally, a collaborative research approach to continue the work begun here in the cross fertilisation of theoretical bodies of work could bring an interchangeable flow of understanding to the collective and individual fields of operations management, organisational learning and inter-organisational collaboration.

## 6.5 Summing Up

This chapter has reviewed the research aim and objectives and demonstrated how these have been fulfilled and answered the research question "How does performance measurement and management impact organisational learning in the development of collaborative advantage?"

With the perennial challenge created by a collaboration's 'tangled web of goals' (Vangen and Huxham, 2011) there is, perhaps naturally, a subsequent challenge of identifying joint goal and success specificity. What has thus followed is little evidence of joint performance measurement in the five exemplar cases used for data gathering and analysis. Therefore, in the analysis performance measurement gave way to the management of collaborative performance, and more evidently social organisational controls, as the key control in facilitating organisational and individual forms of learning.

The theoretical propositions, which underpin the theoretical contribution, are displayed in Section 5.3 but, for repetition, the findings can be summarised in the following two:

- The potential value of the collaboration can be nurtured through organisational controls which enable explorative and exploitative organisational learning behaviours alongside multi-level goal engagement and success criteria.
- Social control emerges as the more significant control in contrast to technical control in keeping the collaboration going and facilitating learning.

Thus, the findings of this research conclude that organisational controls must be nurtured to manage the multi-faceted goal structure of a collaboration; ensuring organisational learning opportunities, individual and organisational goal attainment and motivation of participants through potential collaborative value. Nurturing the organisational controls requires a balancing of tensions in the moment.

The research does not offer a prescriptive idealistic balance of organisational control and organisational learning behaviours. The balanced learning, clearer goal and success criteria alongside participatory social controls might be utopic (the spirit of collaborative working), but effectiveness and efficiency call for increased goal specificity and action, however it is achieved. A participatory control structure favours highly exploratory learning but

consideration must be given to engaging in exploitative learning behaviours and the virtuosity of any learning that occurs. Always searching for a new way or the 'best' way, may prevent concise action. Although social controls have emerged as the more significant control, the findings suggest that few to no technical controls in play decreases the opportunities for more effective organisational learning. If experiences are not recorded or disseminated then a barrier to learning from success and failure is created, although learning from a collaboration in general is dependent on factors beyond the collaborative boundary. Crucially however, with regards to technical controls, the research finds that there is not always a need for them to ensure effective substantive and process learning occurs.

While the theoretical model and subsequent propositions frame a collaboration type in a given moment, the research findings also demonstrate how social controls can be as dynamic and fluid as the collaboration itself and that a collaboration can and does change its learning behaviours through alterations in social controls and goal specificity. The model does not suggest simultaneous control extremes, rather the possibility of the collaboration existing in one of the quadrants at any given period. Thus, it offers a balance which reflects the current collaborative needs and potential collaborative value. The theory of collaborative advantage literature takes a wide view of context, theorising about collaborations in various forms such as strategic alliances and joint ventures (Hibbert and Huxham, 2005). Although this research has narrowed the contextual scope, it has been able to offer wider generalisability through careful consideration of the extant literature in the fields of organisational control and organisational learning. By drawing on three different bodies of literature knowledge not only has a gap been found but answered through empirical evidence and a discussion in relation to multiple views of inter-organisational working. Explanation of the findings has further enhanced the understanding of the effects of organisational controls on the dynamic, tension fraught nature of inter-organisational collaborations.

The practical implication that can be drawn from the conceptualisations and examples presented in this thesis is that the management and measurement of performance, goals and organisational learning in collaborations is highly resource intensive. It requires a high degree of skill and no lack of commitment and energy from those who are custodians of their direction and development.

## 6.6 Personal Reflection.

The research was able to satisfy my own curiosity which was driven through experience of collaborations in action. Knowing that they were generally perceived as a good idea but with variable results of value, it was somehow comforting to see similar instances of success, failure and frustration in industry contexts other than tourism. Very few of the participants I engaged with felt that their collaboration was not founded upon a good idea, but of course many felt that they wished it was done more effectively and, or, efficiently. Witnessing these experiences in my data collection process convinces me that it is an area worth exploring and understanding more of, especially in the not-for-profit sector where collaborations are built on exchanges of valuable resource. Paradoxically it would seem the need to pool resources together is greater than ever, but the capacity to do so is decreasing and the consequence is an increase in risk; this anecdotal observation of mine would be of provide interesting and no less valuable future research.

As I reflect on the last 42 months that I have been working on this PhD research, it is quite incredible to consider the progress that has been made in my own academic experience. My knowledge acquirement and personal development has gone beyond the knowledge transferred and created in these few hundred pages of text. It has served its purpose to hone and improve my writing skills and my understanding of, and ability to analyse and critique, academic literature. Gaining access to cases and ultimately carrying out interviews severely tested my networking and inter-personal skills, yet I was able to gain the trust and confidence of those whom I encountered, even those who ultimately felt they could not contribute.

There is little I would have changed to the overall process. The collapse of original plan to carry out Action Research with the Scout project was a source of frustration and some time was wasted on those preparations. However, as it could be turned into a case, much of the work until that point could be utilised. If case study was the approach from the outset, then cases and interviews might have commenced sooner. Oddly though this led to the most enjoyable aspect of the research which was to ‘re-discover’ my interest in the philosophical arguments of reality, and our ability to understand and access it. The critical realist stance adopted not only offered the best-fit for this research but is in many aspects the same as my own understanding of the world in which we live. It was a key moment in the journey which gave personal credence to the work I was doing and will likely shape my approach to future research. Further to these more positive experiences I will now be better prepared for the

soul-destroying process of transcribing interviews and manually analysing them; even though I had a relatively small data set, this was not an enjoyable aspect of the thesis. However, much like scaling a Scottish Munro, the rewards at the summit as I had the "lightbulb" moment of seeing the connections in the data, made it worthwhile in the end.

No matter how many times you are told, or you read, that the PhD journey can be an isolating and lonely place, little prepares you for the challenges of working like this when previous experiences have been as part of a team or a wider project; I have met some very intelligent and engaging fellow PhD students and academics, but none of them in my specific area. For me, the barriers to progress were often personal, thus there is sometimes very little help to overcome them. Applying myself to research and writing while caring for a child with multiple disabilities was a very personal challenge, one that had to be overcome with only the moral support of those around me, especially that of my all too understanding wife. Managing home life with the commitment required to complete this work has been my proudest achievement of all the barriers I have had to overcome throughout this process.

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# 8 Appendices

## *8.1 Appendix A: Case Study Protocol*

### Overview

The objective of the research project is to identify how performance measurement and management enables learning in inter-organisational collaborations. This will be achieved by evaluating the impact performance measures have in of a range of collaborative projects and the way performance is managed. The focus will be on a variety of learning outputs which will be initially categorised into 3 types (Transferable, Substantive, Local) and identifying those practices which affect each category.

The data will be collected through a series of interviews with case study companies, alongside a mixture of observations, archives and documentation. The objective of the Case Study Protocol detailed in this document is to provide guidelines to ensure that the data can be collected, presented and analysed in a repeatable and reliable manner by the researcher through minimising interviewer bias as well ensuring that the data is appropriately triangulated.

### Project Descriptor

This PhD research is seeking to answer the question "How does performance measurement and management impact organisational learning in the development of collaborative advantage?"

- Researching five collaborations, instances of learning will be grouped into the following forms:
    1. Experiential Learning: a transferable collaborative process, that is, taking the experiences from one collaborative context and applying them to other circumstances
    2. Substantive learning: knowledge transfer and creation within the collaboration
    3. Local collaborative process learning: learning that occurs in the local context and how practitioners develop their understanding of the situations in which they find themselves

The point of departure for the research is that "an increase in the capability of practitioners to recognise and facilitate opportunities for organisational learning during a collaboration impacts the potential of achieving collaborative advantage." Therefore, there is a need to understand the practices of successful and unsuccessful collaborations and further develop a conceptual handle within collaboration theory for better reflective practice.

This objective is being pursued through an in-depth study and analysis of the literature, followed by an analysis of inter organisational collaborative practices:

Interviews of project leaders and other key stakeholders involved in the identified collaborations are carried out along with a study of any individual or collective performance measure put in place that relates to the collaboration. Where instances of learning have occurred, further evidence will be sought to analyse the consequence and subsequent application of the acquired knowledge, while emerging patterns of when and how performance measurement and management facilitated organisational learning will be captured. The conceptual framework developed in the literature review chapter (Appendix, A.1), setting out how performance measurement and management might trigger organisational learning with subsequent causal effects on the collaborative framework, will guide the data collection process.

## The Unit of Analysis

It is important for this research to set out the unit of analysis for this project. The project focuses on collaborations in a multi inter-organisational setting, focusing on individual and collective organisational learning outcomes. It is not concerned with supply chains, intra-organisational collaborations or dyads. Further focusing the study context each case should be a collaboration that is informal in nature with non-profitable purposes.

To this end, as a guide, the research is interested in cases that meet the following criteria:

- Any inter-organisational collaboration with a minimum of 3 member not for profit organisations.
- Limited by public and voluntary sector.
- Organised with a non-imposed, bottom-up, meta-goal.
- Working in regional clusters.

## Particulars of Each Case

The cases are unlikely to fit the classical management evaluation model. It is expected that many of the instances of organisational learning will be unplanned, emerging from the collaboration as it evolves. The projects will potentially be limited, temporary, due to whatever resources it is relying upon. Secondly, the cases are likely to be characterised by volunteers mixing with non-volunteers given the nature of the two sectors involved in the make-up and dynamics of each case.

## Phase 1 – Set Up

Before doing the case study interviews, where possible, the researcher should try gather information about the project and each member company or business involved. This will assist in formulating the interview strategy. There will likely be administration and organisational practicalities to deal with to ensure timeous and effective running of the process.

### Desk research

As the companies within the collaboration will be unknown to the researcher some general background research will need to be conducted on each individual organisation prior to visiting in order to establish:

- What is it the organisation actually does?
- What size is the organisation?
- What sector does it belong to?
- How they are perceived externally?
- How they compare to their competitors?
- History of partaking in collaborative projects?

The sources of information available to use will vary but will likely include:

- Company website and social media feeds
- 3rd Party websites; main stream and social media
- Print – Company magazines, newsletters and PR
- Central and local government reports

### Meeting with Collaboration Contact.

There should be a key contact or company sponsor with whom an agreement about the conditions of the research will be made. They should be approached with a suitable variation of the standard invitation to partake in research email (Appendix, A.2). Where appropriate, an initial meeting will be arranged to offer further detail of the proposed research and to get some background on the organisations and the people that will be available and willing to be interviewed. The initial meeting should cover at least the following administrative points:

- Timescale of research
- Gaining access to:
    - People (who and how to contact)
    - Facilities (where interviews will be carried out)
    - Documentation

## Confidentiality

Throughout the research confidentiality will be maintained as far as possible: both with the case study organisations and the individuals participating in the interview. It is therefore important that the key contact and all others are ensured of this intention at the outset. A key point to emphasise is that *"if required by the participant then data gathered from any individual person or the company will not be used in any way in any research report or publication that may incriminate or identify them as an organisation or an individual".* If required, formal confidentiality agreements are available that can be amended and signed by the researcher and the company or the individual concerned.

## Documentation

The amount of documentation that will be available will vary from collaboration to collaboration, case to case, however, it will be beneficial to gain access to whatever documentation is available. Gaining access to documents prior to the interview stage will allow for a deeper and greater understanding of the interview responses as they occur; access to documentation is however not necessary at the beginning stage as there is an interview protocol to be followed for each case in any regard.

Documentation is also of benefit to triangulation of data to increase validity and reliability of findings. This can be any documentation that may relate to the collaboration in question e.g.:

- Terms of Reference
- Memorandum
- Evaluation reports
- Minutes of meetings
- Communication (emails or letters)

Where an organisation does not allow data to be taken away, the researcher will ask to see supporting data if possible. This will then be followed up with a brief description in the case report. Any obtained document will be filed in a secure manner to ensure company confidentiality is maintained.

## Arranging Interviews

In regard to persons that should be approached for interview, it will be of importance to interview those who have participated and had influence in the collaboration, either over the full or significant period of the case.

Who these persons are in terms of position within their individual organisation will be entirely case dependent on the nature of the collaboration and this too will have an impact on how many people are available to be interviewed.

Interviews will be limited to no more than 2 per day to allow for the researcher to write up immediate thoughts and observations while allowing enough time to rest before engaging in another interview. The interviewer should not be fatigued so to engage fully with the interviewee. Contact will be made directly with the interviewees before interviewing them to arrange interview times and to offer the chance to answer any questions they may have about the process.

## Phase 2 - Formulate Interview Strategy

Each interview undertaken is not expected to last more than 60 minutes as this is seen as reasonable commitment from the interviewee. For the protocol it should be determined if it is suitable to adapt the interview approach depending on the role and function of the interviewee.

As trying to cover all the areas of the collaboration is quite difficult in an hour the view could be taken that some people may have more to contribute than others in some areas. However, in order to ensure reliability of data, the researcher intends, where possible, to cover each area with each person interviewed, and where possible to corroborate interview findings with data gathered from another source, for example, documentation or non-participatory observations. Where there is a conflict in opinion between interviewees and/or observations and documentation – this will be explicitly reported. The objectives of each interview are:

- To be guided by the semi-structured interview questions
- to have generic conversations with the interviewees; avoiding influencing answers.
- to listen actively to the responses while note taking
- to pick up and develop key points of interest raised by the interviewee

This should lead to an understanding of the nature of the collaboration in question under the following headings:

- Reasons for collaboration
- Processes and activities of collaboration
- Measurement of success
- Past collaborative experience
- Significant learning and changes during collaboration
- Transferable learning processes
- Knowing success/failure.

## Interview Questions: Semi-Structured:

The following provide guidelines to conversations that are intended to be held under each heading. It is important to note that the following list does not constitute a comprehensive list of questions that are to be asked of each interviewee. The interview is planned to be undertaken as a natural conversation so that the answers to these questions emerge naturally. A fully structured or mechanistic question and answer session based on these questions may influence the answers provided by the interviewee thus affecting the validity of the data provided.

## Questions:

NB: When asking about the collaboration be aware of the 'Themes' of the theory of collaborative advantage. E.g.: Levels and alignment of goals/aims; membership; leadership; power; trust; representation; fatigue etc.

### *General*

From your point of view tell me about Collaboration X? For example:

- How did it come about?
- Who was involved?
- What was your organisations motivation for participation? Was this different from your own motivation?
- Why were these organisations working together? What did each 'bring to the table'?
- What challenges did you face? How were these resolved?
  (Huxham and Vangen, 2004; 2005)

### *Past Experience*

What is/was your organisation's experience in working in similar environments?

What is/was your personal experience of working in collaborations?

### *Performance*

In what way was performance measured? Why was it measured this way? If not, why not?

Is this similar to your own organisation?

What challenges were faced in measuring performance?

Did the way it was measured change at any point? Why? What affect did that have?

### *Success*

Was it successful? How do you know?

Successful for whom? (The collaboration? Individual organisation? You personally?)

### *Learning*

What changes were made during the collaboration? (Are things done differently now? Why were these changes made?)

Have all the changes been positive? How do you know?

Would you have done anything differently?

What, if anything, have you learned? How?

What have you taken from this back to your organisation? Has anything changed in light of collaboration X?

Can, have, or will you use anything from this experience elsewhere?

(Huxham and Hibbert 2004; 2005; 2008; Holmqvist, 2002; 2004)

### *Exit*

Does the collaboration still exist?

If Yes:

- Are you and, or, your organisation still involved? Why? What has made you decide to remain or leave?
- Where is the exit point? When and how will you know to stop participation?
- Do you believe you are in a position now that your organisation can collaborate more effectively in the future?

If No:

- What was the exit point? When and how did you know to stop participation?
- Do you believe you are in a position now that your organisation can collaborate more effectively in the future?

## Phase 3 Conducting Interviews

The interviews should be carried out as planned and detailed in the previous section.

It is intended to:

- Ensure that, where possible, all interviews are recorded using electronic recording equipment.
- Take written notes.
- Maintain a research file to facilitate the recording of all relevant observations.

All the electronic recording files, any notes and research files are to be stored securely using university approved servers and will be ready to submit to any authorised person in order to ensure reliability and repeatability. These can be further made available to interested parties once full anonymisation of the data has occurred.

## Pilot Case

A final preparation for data collection is to conduct a pilot case study to try out the suitability of the protocol and to identify its suitability. It is intended that if successful the pilot case will be used as the first case of the multi-case research.

## Phase 4 – Analysing Data

The data collected from the interviews will be analysed and both the instances of organisational and individual learning as well as role of performance measurement and management will be captured. Other themes of the theory of collaborative advantage will be noted and any significant influence that emerge from the findings will also be analysed in relation to the relationship of learning and performance within the collaboration. The results of each case study will be documented in a case study report.

## Case Study Report

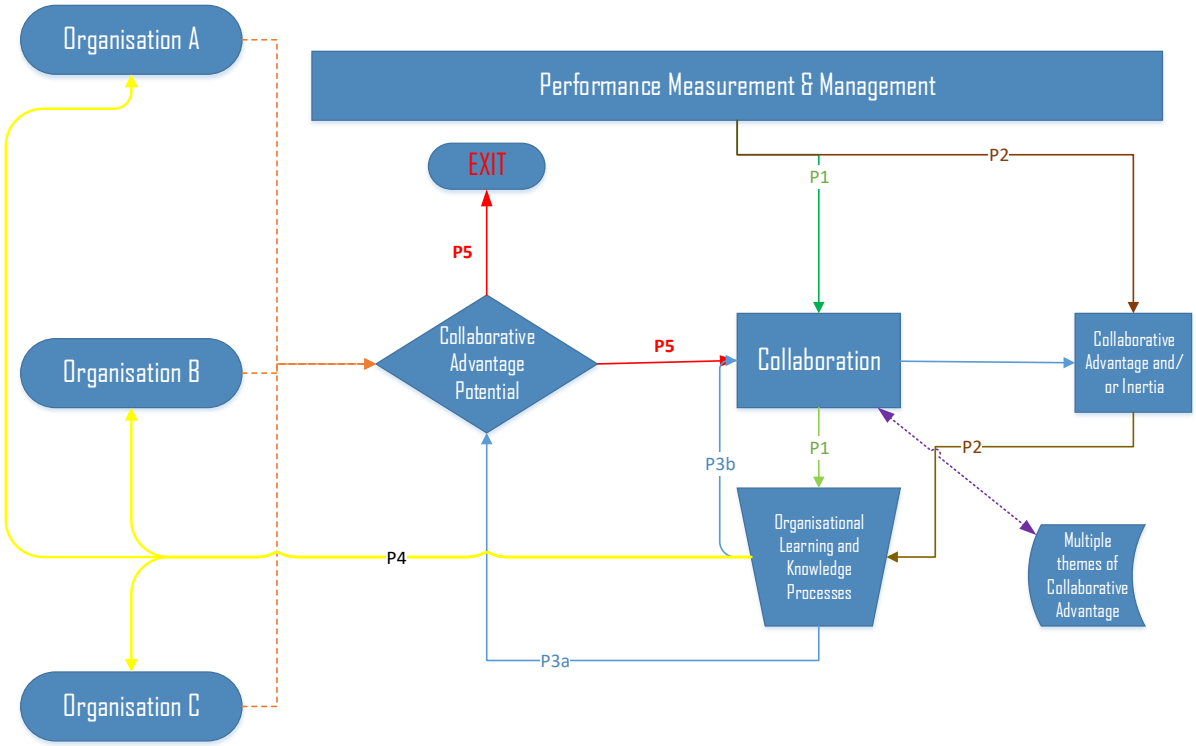
Once analysed, each case will be documented in detail in a Case Study Report. It will end with a short conclusion discussing the interrelations between the different factors.

The report should be structured as follows:

1. Case overview
2. Who was interviewed/other data techniques
3. Challenges of data gathering
4. Reason for collaborating
5. Past experience
6. Description of type of collaborative activity
7. Performance Measurements: Tracking success
8. Changes of note during collaboration/Learning
9. Conclusion or continuation of collaboration
10. General notes: Summary and comments

## Appendices for Case Study Protocol

# Appendix A.1 Conceptual Framework




Conceptual Framework of Organisational Learning in a Collaboration

## 8.1.1.1 Appendix A.2 Sample Invitation Email

Hello,

I am a post-graduate researcher at Heriot Watt. I am exploring how managing projects involving three or more organisations actually works in practice.

As someone who is involved in such a project, I'd like 60 – 90 Minutes of your time to sit and chat informally about the story of a project that you are or have been involved in: what has and hasn't gone well, what worked well and what didn't etc. This will enable me to write up my findings and improve teaching students how to manage such projects.

The project discussed really can be anything as long as it involved your organisation/charity/group working with 2 or more other organisations. (So, for example, something that involved 2 charities and a public sector body, or several voluntary organisations coming together etc.). There will be a few questions to guide the chat but nothing terribly structured and the information given by you will be anonymised and the process will be treated with due care as outlined by the university's research and ethics policy.

Please contact me directly if you are willing to participate or have further questions about being involved.

Many thanks,

Gerald Melvin
Post-Graduate Researcher
School of Social Sciences
Heriot-Watt University
Edinburgh, EH14 4AS

## 8.2 Appendix B: KSGC – From Evaluation to Research

Although the catalyst for this research came from the researches own experiences in collaborative work in the tourism industry, an invitation was received from the Clyde Regional Scout Council to commence an evaluation project. In April 2012, Clyde Regional Scout Council, in partnership with Kelvin Valley Scout District, Girlguiding Dunbartonshire and the Scottish Prison Service established a prison-based Scout & Guide club at HMP Low Moss, Glasgow, UK. This was later named the Kelvin Scout and Guide Club and will be referred to as KSGC. The work to support the starting of this new club was part of the Scouts' Region Development Project and, from 2014 to 2016, funded a part-time member of staff to lead and support the volunteer team. Unsurprisingly the project was attracting considerable attention from both internal and external audiences. Being 'a first' for Scouting in the UK, there was a need for Clyde Region to be able to support the development and sharing of good practice and to help inform others how this might be rolled out as a wider project across the UK.

### Project Evaluation

This purpose of the evaluation was to assess the KSGC from the perspective of Clyde Regional Scouts, while not excluding that of all stakeholders and members in what was a multi-faceted project. The decision was taken to use an external evaluator to draw in additional experience and knowledge but also to bring fresh and unbiased perspective to their work. It was of great importance to identify any positive contributions the club was making and to note the weaknesses or inconsistencies in performance. Having completed six months of data collection, the researcher compiled a written report which led to recommendations for future improvements and developments with the aim of enabling the Scout board to assess the sustainability of the project. Before commencing, the researcher had to learn about the culture of the Scouts, undertaking some of their online courses for volunteers, learning what is expected of all organisation members regarding knowledge, safety and safeguarding. The collaboration itself was a first for the Scouts, so it was not without challenges in some of the simplest of detail. For example, for the evaluation the researcher had to negotiate for the sake of consistency of reading, that the final report did not use the usual Scouting or Girlguiding terminology of a Scout Group or Guide Unit but instead referred to it as 'the Club' for a neutral reference to the mixed provision of Scouting and Guiding activities.

The evaluation was to be a general review of the collaboration therefore the researcher was permitted to access and observe a variety of phenomena at play. The interest was in the

holistic management of such projects, given the experiences of difficulties encountered in this area.

> Such experiences in the tourism industry led the researcher to question if and how organisations could learn to make inter-organisational collaborative projects work as they develop and how they could learn to do them better more effectively and efficiently in the future (Section 1.1.1).

The evaluation of KSGC gave the access to begin designing how to approach this consideration. As the stakeholders, including funding agencies, wanted to assess the overall effectiveness and value-for-money represented by this collaborative working, one possible approach for the research was to seek to establish a methodology for evaluating complex, inter-organisational projects in a way that would achieve this. This approach would place the focus of the research on performance evaluation of complex inter-organisational projects. The integration of project specific performance measures with "business as usual" measures of individual organisations would be a line of investigation; identifying and developing appropriate managerial routines and review processes to enable the collaborating organisations to effectively collaborate.

## Evaluation Process

Archival data was gathered from the limited qualitative and quantitative data that had already been collected and recorded by the project group. Funding, attendance, recruitment and training information has been recorded by Clyde Scouts. The quality of this data varies throughout the life of the project. Suggested reasons for this inconsistency include the evolving nature of the project and the time constraints and prison regulations that on occasion would not permit collection of data during the sessions. The researcher found however that there were instances when data was collected by the volunteers but not written up by the club leader and opportunities for interim reports were either not taken or recorded accurately. To supplement and expand these data, semi-structured interviews were arranged with some of the key stakeholders, persons who were either directly or indirectly involved with the club. The interviewees were representative of all the members in this multi-stakeholder project. Where possible interviews were done in the community and digitally recorded. Those interviews which were carried out within the prison were not permitted to be recorded digitally, this included stakeholders related to HMP Low Moss (prison officers, prisoners and families). Efforts were made to create focus groups with stakeholders, but this was not possible due to geographical and time restraints and the restrictions around access to Low

Moss prison. Monthly or more frequent non-participatory observations of the KSGC were carried out by the researcher over a 6-month period (Jan 2016 – Jun 2016). To be readily identifiable to all the participants, their families and to prison staff, the club's uniform was worn. To gain a deeper understanding of the project the researcher did take part in some light activities with the participants but only under strict guidance and instruction from the club's volunteers so not to interfere with the running of the operation or activities in any way. The key purpose and benefits of the observations was to gain a fuller understanding of the project in action and to establish the trust of, and creditability from the multiple stakeholders. Further to this it enabled a validation of other forms of data collected and to purposefully make recommendations through both the data and experience.

## Evaluation Findings

As outlined previously the intention was to view the management of the KSGC with a focus on how they managed and measured performance and how the learning occurred in the collaboration, either together or as individuals. It became apparent that there was no functioning joint performance measurement system in place. There were some individual organisational measurements; the prison was content to have a slot filled in their family visit schedule by reputable charities and was praised in the inspector's report. The Scouts had a paid member of staff to oversee and take charge of performance feedback, however he was not reporting as should. Finally, the Guides were motivated by individual altruism, their interest was ensuring that it was taking place and if they were making some anecdotal difference to the participants, but they had little concern beyond this. Thus, what was found was a disconnected and fragmented collaboration; it was relying on each other but not collectively.

The KSGC did not have set common aims so it is not surprising that it struggled at occasion with inertia. There were agendas in the project, some of which were overt, but others were hidden, possibly deliberately. The initial goal of the collaboration was to set up a joint Scout and Guide Club within the Low Moss prison. This initial goal was at least agreed and could be said to be the starting point for getting the collaboration moving. However, the collaboration did not have an agreed idea of what success would look like, so it was concluded in the evaluation report that too many of the aims were either hidden or assumed. For example, many of the individual volunteers who led the sessions had their own individual goals; to improve a CV, to gain work experience, moral obligations driven by religious beliefs etc. Time was not taken to get agendas out in the open. Although goals were not

formalised week by week, trust was being built by simply achieving a regular club with returning participants.

Leadership is a complex theme in the context of KSGC despite it only having three organisations (Scouts, Guides, Prison). There was no formal agreement, so it was never overtly clear who was driving the agenda or who were the most influential individuals. Leadership of activities on the ground was also a challenge as many of the individuals were volunteers. Working in a cohesive partnership may require some strong leadership, a trustworthiness in each other. The Guides had concerns over some items but were unable or choosing not to raise them. The prison was not always supporting the collaboration as the others wished, but there was not a champion, a 'go-to' person to lead from their side, nor any indicators to highlight dissatisfaction.

Another notable theme coming from the KSGC was that of 'power.' The literature points to the name of the collaboration having an influence on what the collaboration does and potentially influences the shape and agenda. (Huxham and Vangen, 2004). In the case of the KSGC, the Scouts are more strongly represented in the name. The Guides required the resources of the Scouts, so it could even unconsciously have been a concession to give the Scouts greater precedence in the naming of the collaboration. However, the balance of power is more even by adopting the term 'club' – something that is not used by either individual organisation. This gave legitimacy to both organisations to lead on the activity programme. Some literature also points to organisations acting like the power belongs to those with the purse strings. There was no evidence of this however the Scouts had greater access to financial support than the Guides, so this was cited as a secondary reason for collaborating, while some of the Scouts involved were paid, the Guides were purely volunteers. Each of the 3 members did bring various resources to the collaboration:

- Low Moss – Facilities and access to participants
- Scouts – IT, Financial Backing, Paid Leader/manager
- Guides – Highest level of skilled volunteers

Power was not stable in the KSGC, moving between those that have access to the agenda, those leading the weekly sessions, those with influence on individual organisation policy etc. It is not difficult to see that the power moves through the various members and stakeholders of KSGC. The families and prisoners have power too as their attitude, behaviour and participation has had an influence on anything that could be termed a collaborative success. There were signs of small changes occurring in the running of the collaboration which may

be classed as ‘organisational learning’ as it has enacted change, but decisions were viewed as being ‘ad-hoc’ and not done with strategic purpose.

These observations and evidenced based themes that came from the 6-month study of the KSGC informed the evaluation report and the next stage of PhD research design. It highlighted several areas for improvement within the project and concluded with recommendations based on this literature (Table 8:1). One of the recommendations put to the KSGC was to implement regular project reviews to allow for performance measurement to help assess where the project is meeting its outcomes and where additional support, or adjustment, is required. There was a general agreement and acceptance among members of the KSGC that the proposed interventions of the evaluation could be applied to tackle the ongoing inertia. One of the managers of the organisational partners described the evaluation, a type of performance review, as a “wake-up call” highlighting the need to “almost press the reset button.” This was an early indication to the researcher that local collaborative process learning (Hibbert and Huxham, 2005) could be facilitated through some form of shared performance system.

The same evaluation report has led one of the member organisations to re-asses the resource that is being invested into the KSGC, questioning whether the potential of achieving a collaborative advantage in this project is still of value. There has been difficulty in measuring the declared, but not necessarily shared, goals in this project of recidivism and increased Scout membership which would have assisted in the decision-making process. The evidence, albeit in just this one case, suggested to the researcher that organisational learning can be used to assess what can be termed a collaborative [advantage] potential (El Mokadem, 2010).

| Potential Reason for Collaborative Inertia (Bititci *et al.*, 2007) | Recommended Proposal/Intervention for KSGC Project. |
|---|---|
| Failure to identify a common ground; Unrealistic objectives of partners; Failure to fulfil objectives and needs of partners. | COLLABORATIVE PURPOSE - Goal setting should lead to a shared agreement of what success looks like. Discuss the expectations of each stakeholder, agree a set of KPIs or marker that reflects the collaborative purpose - work towards achieving that which would not be possible as the individual organisation. |
| Absence of an operational system to manage the collaborative enterprise; Unfair distribution of benefits due to ignorance of each other's competencies and contribution. | CONSISTENCY AND REGULARITY IN COMMUNICATION - Regular 'Project Reviews' will allow for performance measurement to help assess where the group is succeeding and where additional support or adjustment is required. |
| Failure to focus on customers' needs. | COMPULSORY MINIMUM TRAINING: Training with the customers' needs in mind, being flexible to the unpredictable demands of the end user (the participants). |
| Lack of commitment by one or more of the partners. | RE-COMMITMENT FROM HMP LOW MOSS: They are identified as the least committed of the partners |
| Focusing on individual short-term benefits rather than focusing on long-term benefits collectively. | CREATE STRONGER LINKS WITH EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS - They can help to understand the longer-term impact of the project. What knowledge exists in the individual organisations or stakeholders that can be shared to the longer-term collective benefit? |

**Table 8:1 Project Recommendations**
*(Adapted from Melvin, 2016)*

## 8.3 Appendix C: Within-Case Data Matrices

# Case 1: KSGC

| | Theme | Scouts | Guides | Evaluation | Observations |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1st Level: Stand Alone Themes | Purpose (Reason for Collaborating) | *"Girl guiding needed us on board to help deliver activities for boys and girls…then pulled together people and allowed it to go in an organic direction without any real plan and structure...we didn't have much contact with prison at the beginning, we were working through the guides….There were weeks when things were not happening but the prison did not report this – it left me feeling almost, not like they didn't care, but I would have expected some contact.."* | | The collaboration began quite unexpectedly with an offer from volunteers from the Guides to support the prison's family visit time out of altruistic driven will. The prison were in need of volunteer groups and the Guides were open to reaching out and trying new ways of working. The Guides sought support from the Scouts as it was not in their own remit to engage with male children and they were unable to recruit as many volunteers as they would like. | |
| | | | | the three organisations being keen for some sort of program to be offered to the families affected by imprisonment there was not an established agreed and shared raison d'etre | |
| | **Organisational Learning** | | | | |
| | Substantive and Process | *"The newbies enthusiasm was welcome our evaluation report highlighted that there was an extreme in experience among the volunteers from both groups, the scouts and the guides."* | *"At the start the program was all muddled as were the people, we did not have set teams for example and we found that didn't work so we changed that. We did have some scouters originally, but we found that mixed teams didn't work as well because we didn't have the same chemistry or didn't know each other outside of the sessions, so fixed teams worked better."* | The collaboration were guilty of not addressing issues at the time, | |
| | | *"Longer standing members can get upset with newer volunteers that might suggest that something gets done a different way…"* | *"They introduced IT to the group. The OSM system that we use for communicating and planning is fantastic, and we still use that. At first we were reluctant to do it this way, but they were quite insistent and they were right."* | | |
| | | *"…is to continue to be involved beyond the OSM hosting we are doing now…"* | *"The timings of the sessions, the groups, team rotas and how we built the program all developed through trial and error and we have a way that seems to work and has worked well for a couple of years now"* | | |
| | | *"I would not let it muddle along…. Do it well or do not bother."* | | | |
| | | *"The evaluation report made some interesting observations. It made some good suggestions in terms of how to take it to a different level. It also reaffirmed some things we probably knew ourselves but I am always warmed by the fact that if you get a report back on something it does reaffirm what you already knew as well as giving some additional stuff it means you were not totally left wing with everything you were doing."* | | | |
| | Experiential | *"We have a project around an ethnic and religious minority group – there is a feeling among some that is should just be started and let to go organically but I am now very conscious that that is not always the best way to do it, so it will inform that decision making in the not too distant future in actual fact."* | *"We do get full support from the wider guide network but there is no succession plan in place, we have offered to share our experiences internally, but this has not really happened."* | From the completion of that evaluation attempts have been made to disseminate the experiential learning through their own organisation and the experienced gained is going into the decision making process for future internal and collaborative projects. | |
| | | | *"There also has been a high turnover of volunteers and that has had a negative impact."* | | |

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| | Organisational Controls/PMM | *"We never got to grips with what good scouting or good guiding at [the prison] might look like other than anecdotally"* | *"We do have an altruistic approach and the positive stories about children taking their experiences home with them are ways in which we know we are doing well. Wouldn't say tracking performance would be necessary unless searching for funding, which we weren't* | communication and face to face meetings tailed off as the collaboration progressed, resulting in groups not knowing how each other were performing, or unable to share best practice or raise concerns | |
| | | *"..It was my perception at the start that the guides would be leading this as they had started it but it clearly wasn't. They had the original discussions but I do not think they ever believed or saw themselves as being in charge or in the lead as such .* | *"We were not looking for any additional praise or exposure from it whereas the Scouts definitely exploited the project for PR, they were far more interested in that side of things and were quite happy to take credit for the project to gain free advertising for the movement and their current vacancies"* | there was no ongoing critical reflection of the KSGC | |
| | | *"They have always had a disconnect but they have shown enthusiasm, we had a couple of meetings with SMT and they were always happy with it but in the same way they might be happy with a story teller. So, they did not seem to have an interest in the scouting/guiding element of it."* | *"We have a 'coffee time' approach to our discussions and our relationship with the members of the scouts was enhanced because of that "* | | |
| | | *"There was an attempt at structuring things. There was the non-badge badge scheme. When that was developing I had more positive thoughts about how it was going as began to look like more standard scouting and guiding. We didn't want it to be exactly standard but to look like it. Once we were having weeks when volunteers were not there that is when alarm bells were ringing ."* | *"Communication has always been an issue, the logistics and timings of meetings. When it has been good you really notice the positive difference ."* | | |
| | | *A: "To prove with evidence that it was worthwhile, I am not sure we could measure our parameters of what is worthwhile." B: "I disagree because if you start with a blank page and… tease out why we are doing this what do we want to do? What are the objectives, what do we want to achieve? What are our outputs we would like to see, what resources do we need?... Something in place from the beginning as opposed to something of the hoof half way through." A: You would have to decide somewhere in that the balance lies from altruism and would you bring it to a halt if the criteria were not being met. That is quite difficult to do in this setting "* | | | |
| | | "*…would have made it clearer who was responsible for what, where responsibility of management sat as opposed to everybody just kind of doing their own bit and we could have thrashed out some objectives around what does good look like…... Would it have changed where we are just now? I am not sure, I am not chucking blame anywhere, but one individual who was lying or bullshitting through the process, and the first law of scouting is that a scout is to be trusted."* | | | |
| | Goals (General) | *"They have always had a disconnect but they have shown enthusiasm, we had a couple of meetings with SMT and they were always happy with it but in the same way they might be happy with a story teller. So, they did not seem to have an interest in the scouting/guiding element of it."* | *"We were not looking for any additional praise or exposure from it whereas the Scouts definitely exploited the project for PR, they were far more interested in that side of things and were quite happy to take credit for the project to gain free advertising for the movement and their current vacancies"* | each of the three participating organisations entered into this collaboration with goals at the organisational level that made the collaboration seem worthwhile without being able to identify a strongly shared collaborative meta-goal | |
| **2nd Level: Paired Themes** | Organisational Controls/Learning | *"There was an attempt at structuring things. There was the non-badge badge scheme. When that was developing I had more positive thoughts about how it was going as began to look like more standard scouting and guiding. We didn't want it to be exactly standard but to look like it. Once we were having weeks when volunteers were not there that is when alarm bells were ringing."* | *"There does seem to be less communication just now. Previously there was more face to face meetings, using the facilities offered by the prison but it is very difficult now to know how the other group sessions are going and how the other volunteers are doing. Do not feel they know all the other volunteers."* | Only the Scouts were eventually keen on creating some sort of performance review through the evaluation which as would be expected highlighted areas of some of the exploratory learning behaviours and through recommendations offered an opportunity to exploit some of the general learning created within the collaboration. The Guides goals were more vague and altruistic and the prison were only interested in a weekly activity taking place and had a much more distant relationship with the collaboration. This lack of agreed or shared collaborative goal too acted as a barrier to organisational learning and PMM. | |

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| | Organisational Controls/Goals | *"…we wanted to bring it back to scouting and try the 'trojan horse' model.... So, the guides are very much in the background, I just sometimes poach guide leaders and try turn them into scouts!* | *"We were motivated by just simply looking to make a difference, even of it was just one child who we had a real impact on that would make it for us all worthwhile….Going well is kids enjoying sessions and people turning up, we are not looking to formalise for us what success would be."* | Many of the volunteers the Scouts put forward were only interested in their own goals of work experience and CV enhancement. Some attempts to offer a training program for the volunteers were made but the training beyond the legal requirement of working with vulnerable groups was never enforced |
| | Organisational Learning/Goals | *"I think that is almost indicative of the organic way things developed, instead of sitting down and making a plan at the start as a more traditional way of developing a model of project is right I am going to do this you are going to do this and you are going to do this and we all have a proportioned role in delivering the service"* | *"We have not had the same notion of expansion as the scouts have had, we haven't been actively looking to roll this out to other areas or to duplicate it elsewhere"* | Scouts were open to learning, informally at least, and open to emerging goals, with a sense that the collaboration should be 'organic.' |
| | | *"The organic way of growth took us somewhere we would not have put on our radar but in hindsight and moving forward if someone was to come and say I think we should go there I would say let's take some time to put some structure and planning in place round about it."* | | |
| **3rd Level: Combined Themes** | OC/OL/Goals | *"…would have made it clearer who was responsible for what, where responsibility of management sat as opposed to everybody just kind of doing their own bit and we could have thrashed out some objectives around what does good look like…... Would it have changed where we are just now? I am not sure, I am not chucking blame anywhere, but one individual who was lying or bullshitting through the process, and the first law of scouting is that a scout is to be trusted."* | | *"KSGC did not have set common aims so it is not surprising that it struggled at occasion with inertia. There were agendas in the project. They were a mix of the Explicit, Assumed and Hidden. The Initial goal of the collaboration was to set up a joint Scout and Guide Club within the prison. This initial goal was at least agreed and could be said to be the starting point for getting the collaboration moving.* |
| | | *A: The guides may not feel like they need a lead whereas we would feel lost without a lead. B: If I was to start again or go to another prison I would be looking at a small group, steering or management, where you have a representative from all partners in the collaboration with an aim and some form of objectives that the group would work toward……made it clearer who was responsible for what…..Would it have changed where we are just now? I am not sure, I am not chucking blame anywhere, but one individual who was lying or bullshitting through the process, and the first law of scouting is that a scout is to be trusted so unless I smelled a large rat I am a believer in taking folk at face value. A: you do have to let them 'take the cup' B: you cannot micro manage people or you manage them out of existence A: a problem with outcomes is you can measure badges but you were kind of less concerned with that and more concerned with what the prison wanted out of it…so to a certain extent getting the badges was not important but as long as the family relationship was being maintained. A difficult one.* | | *The collaboration did not have an agreed idea of what success would look like. It can be said then that too many of the aims were either hidden or assumed.* |
| | | *"We have a project for an ethnic and religious minority group – there is a feeling among some that is should just be started and let to go organically but I am now very conscious that that is not always the best way to do it, so it will inform that decision making in the not too distant future in actual fact."* | | *Volunteers had their own individual agendas (improve CV, work experience, moral obligations driven by religious beliefs etc.) Time was not taken to get agendas out in the open.* |
| | | | *This impacts on the other themes which are interlinked – trust, power, leadership, membership"* | |
| **Other Points:** | | *"There were weeks when things were not happening, but the prison did not report this – it left me feeling almost, not like they didn't care, but I would have expected some contact"* | | *Desire from volunteers to keep turning up even at end when communication and structure was waning* |

**Table 8:1 Case 1 Within-Case Data Matrix**

## Case 2: Grey Space

| | Theme | Police Scotland<br>Participant A (Project Initiater) | Scottish Catholic Diocese of Paisley<br>Partcipant B | West of Scotland Regional Equality Council: Participant C | Observations |
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| **1st Level: Stand Alone Themes** | Purpose (Reason for Collaborating) | *"I came up with the idea of the Grey Space group and I had pitched it to all the individuals I had met over the previous months, the all thought it sounded a bit flakey but I managed to use my inter-personal skills to persuade them all to come together to talk about this concept of community cohesion"* | *I didn't think that this was something as auxiliary or supplementary to the Catholic church, but integral to it…… So I thought that is an interesting and useful way for going about this but for me it also had just as a significant flip side to it which is even more positive which is it provides a convenient forum for every civic leader in society to get to know each other personally and to build relationships and so there was sharing of information but there is also forming of relationships"* | *"…an opportunity not only networking but in terms of possibly understanding some of the issues that are a potential friction between authorities and ethnic minority communities. We are trying to understand and solve the issue of why minority ethnic communities would not be so open to getting in touch with police and things like that, and I was also interested in what he was talking about. He was talking about Grey Space being about an opportunity to try and stop problems before the happen and for me that seemed to be worthwhile."* | |
| | | *"We had some that would not participate. They didn't think it was for them. Not the non-statutory groups though; all third sector organisations that we have approached have participated, the partner that I found difficult to get on board….were not interested, I could not persuade them it was something for them. I was quite surprised at that because I could persuade everybody else, but I just accepted that at the end of the day."* | | | |
| | **Organisational Learning** | | | | |
| | Substantive and Process | *"it was very much the police show and very much the police telling them things, rather than getting interaction. So I started using social hand grenades…, as a provocateur for discussion. And god did they work, some of them have been really good and got them talking. I have got to be honest and say I'm not sure that the group always get why I am doing that but there are 2 motivations though, the first is that these should be talked about and the group is a good place to do it but I have got an underlying motivation which is it gets people talking, and gets people exchanging ideas and I think that establishes greater trust, I think, I hope so, because this is experimental, so I don't know"* | *"What has been useful is to have the meetings around in situ of the organisations involved, we have held it here it has been in the mosque, places that have the capacity to hold it. That has been a good experience to go to the context of another organisation and to take in their context as well."* | *"One thing I particularly like is how we talk about things that are not normally discussed, the elephant in the room, things that are normally swept under the carpet."* | |
| | | *"Discussion in the group, things they have asked for, that's all. Not wearing the uniform, things like that have come up, that was even a jokey thing, but we didn't take it jokey, we thought it was a good point.* | | | |
| | | *"[The changes are] All positive. They seem to like what we are doing and given the way the group is they would tell us, or I would like to think they would"* | | | |
| | Experiential | *"In terms of the organisation we are feeding into our reporting structures that we are doing this and that it is a good thing, and what is happening from it. So that will eventually cascade."* | *"I have knowledge of Grey Space but no one else [in the organisation] has, they have no particular understanding of it"* | *"the way we work in (Wesrec) is that every Monday we have got a staff meeting where people feedback about what they have been doing and where, and see if others have questions and maybe we adopt good models of practice that we share…."* | |
| | | *"purely because of the knowledge – I wouldn't see me getting that knowledge in any of the other collaborations that we have done. But on the other hand the knowledge actually does help when we are working with other groups."* | | | |

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| | Organisational Controls/PMM | *"we need to make sure they feel safe in what they are saying. We want them to tell the truth from their perspective, we do not want what they think we want to hear."* | *"….but they wouldn't feel as keenly as something as would be directly useful to them."* | *"The only way for me [to measure the performance of the group] is consistency of people who are coming and more people coming on board. That is why I said it was a bit different from projects I work with, measuring the success so to speak is a bit different. You can only measure it by the fact that people are still coming, and they feel you know that is worthwhile."* | What has been observed of the collaboration is a resistance in the group to being measured, scepticism among some participants and trust has not been fully established. This resistance to imposing an evaluation comes with a consequence of missed substantive, process and experiential learning opportunities. (observation) |
| | | *"Discussion in the group, things they have asked for, that's all. Not wearing the uniform, things like that have come up, that was even a jokey thing, but we didn't take it jokey, we thought it was a good point. [It is] All positive. They seem to like what we are doing and given the way the group is they would tell us, or I would like to think they would."* | *"Appreciate what each other is trying to do for the common good… I do not think it is possible to stay too narrowly focused on what is the rational…I think it is broadly enough, the way that [they] have defined this is let's all get together as civic society, yes let's try point out any particular tensions, but while we are here let's try and get to know each other…..use it as a forum to work together, which of itself will bear down on tensions."* | *"So far it is working but I believe there is a certain point we will sit down and review and say what can we change how do we take this forward? Up until then people probably will see a different angle working in the group. As far as I am concerned it is working for the reasons why it was set up…… At one point I think it will be a good thing to look at a review. From when it was built we said it was kind of police led, so it was the agenda of the police – so it would be good to see if the communities have issues they would want to be part and parcel of the group agenda."* | Corroborating what has been captured in the interviews it has been observed that "success" is driving the collaboration but the value of the outputs are so far only perceptual (observation) |
| | | *"I think it would be very difficult for the police to try and tell other organisations how they should disseminate these discussions and information. It would be "wanky" for us to try and make some stipulation around that, it needs to come from them and it needs to be organic…. we cannot tell them what to do, I understand that"* | | | How the collaboration is controlled has to date been quite deliberate, but it has not been brought out into the agenda to discuss, which is allowing it to begin to drift and threatens collaborative inertia (observations). |
| | | *"There are folk that never trapped…..I will never cast that up to them"* | | | |
| | | *"we are doing an academic evaluation just now, that will ultimately report. That is one thing that will come in the fullness of time and it was always intended we would do some form of evaluation down the line, so that doesn't exist yet."* | | | |
| | | *"I would be loathed to introduce some sort of quantitative, KPI , I just do not think it is realistic. I have seen you know these numbers, give it a rating from 1 to 10 and stuff like that, it is so subjective"* | | | |
| | | *"The group has been and continues to be successful."* | | | |
| **2nd Level: Paired Th** | Goals (General) | *"Oh aye [it's been resource intensive], but that is of me, I am making that decision…. This will sound "wanky" again – social entrepreneurship is what I would describe this as – seeing a problem and applying a sort of flair and initiative to the problem. That is to be encouraged, organisations are terrible at telling people how to do things, and being prescriptive in how they do them, I think it should be flipped on its head and say we would like this to happen and you crack on"* | *"I think part of it as bishop and as me, I see the importance of it personally and as the bishop. I don't think every bishop would see it as useful as I see it first of all, so I don't think in other dioceses a bishop would have sent himself, I don't think they would have seen how worthwhile it is to be committed to it."* | *"It is obvious the police have an agenda but as communities we can take that on board and take it as an opportunity to deal with certain issues as well, so I wouldn't say it is entirely police lead, it is formed in a way all stakeholders can use it for their benefit of communities."* | |

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| | | *"so I would probably take a mental calculation of which of the bishop's is likely to be interested in this and would likely be able to be committed to it and then propose it but I would say there is probably not any point in proposing it to other ones"* | *"...it is not about that [a specific problem to solve]. It is about looking at the possible tension or checking the temperature of the community and seeing if there are any possible issues that maybe might come out of minority ethnic communities, getting in touch with other groups and trying to curb that."* | | |
| | | *"…it would take that length of time to form good relationships, a good understanding of what we all do and a good base to find things to work together, to work to creating a culture…. It does exist in bits and bobs, so at the meeting I discovered a representative of the Polish community, they have mass in our cathedral, but I have never met them……So you could see the potential with wee seeds popping up here and there that there is the possibility for us developing into a culture of, it is not there yet but there is no reason why it couldn't happen"* | | | |
| | | *"I think it needs resilience to continue. The more it continues the more we would meet and the more a culture would be created, the more useful it would be…… That, I think, would be a matter of time and I say it is still fledging, it is worth pursuing in order for that to happen."* | | | |
| | Organisational Controls/Learning | *"we need to make sure they feel safe in what they are saying. We want them to tell the truth from their perspective, we do not want what they think we want to hear."* | *"Appreciate what each other is trying to do for the common good… I do not think it is possible to stay too narrowly focused on what is the rational…I think it is broadly enough, the way that [they] have defined this is let's all get together as civic society, yes let's try point out any particular tensions, but while we are here let's try and get to know each other…..use it as a forum to work together, which of itself will bear down on tensions."* | *"….but because of GS I think hang on is that not worth taking back so even my way of doing things is changing and it is due to the interaction with the GS."* | What has been observed of the collaboration is a resistance in the group to being measured, scepticism among some participants and trust has not been fully established. This resistance to imposing an evaluation comes with a consequence of missed substantive, process and experiential learning opportunities. (observation) |
| | | *"Discussion in the group, things they have asked for, that's all. Not wearing the uniform, things like that have come up, that was even a jokey thing, but we didn't take it jokey, we thought it was a good point. [It is] All positive. They seem to like what we are doing and given the way the group is they would tell us, or I would like to think they would."* | | *"So far it is working but I believe there is a certain point we will sit down and review and say what can we change how do we take this forward?"* | |
| | | *"I think it would be very difficult for the police to try and tell other organisations how they should disseminate these discussions and information. It would be "wanky" for us to try and make some stipulation around that, it needs to come from them and it needs to be organic…. we cannot tell them what to do, I understand that"* | *"So far it is working but I believe there is a certain point we will sit down and review and say what can we change how do we take this forward? Up until then people probably will see a different angle working in the group. As far as I am concerned it is working for the reasons why it was set up…… At one point I think it will be a good thing to look at a review. From when it was built we said it was kind of police led, so it was the agenda of the police – so it would be good to see if the communities have issues they would want to be part and parcel of the group agenda."* | | |
| | | *"we are doing an academic evaluation just now, that will ultimately report. That is one thing that will come in the fullness of time and it was always intended we would do some form of evaluation down the line, so that doesn't exist yet."* | | | |
| | Organisational Learning/Goals | "…they are volunteers …. they don't get any money as far as I am aware and the turnover there has been pretty constant - but they want to help, and they want to take part. The people have got lives so they are doing this on top of their day job and that is one of the factors that affects who turns up…….I don't think it matters who goes as long as we get someone who speaks and is prepared to offer an opinion and prepared to have that opinion challenged, in a friendly way, and | *"It would be fuller if I could say I am doing that from the context of knowing who everyone is and roughly what they do. That, I think, would be a matter of time and I say it is still fledging, it is worth* | *"For me personally, the things I am beginning to see when I am not in that space, when I am out in the community, just the way I look at things, because of the knowledge, because of my experience of dealing with GS, is a bit different. Not in a bad way, but in a good way, so I suppose it is worth being there. Also, when I go back… I am inputting in meetings, in our work, there are certain things we can potentially see as growing our projects as well, or ideas we can implement in our project"* | |

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| | | discussion to take place, but also prepared to tell the truth about what is going on." | *pursuing in order for that to happen."* | | |
| | | *".....So now we are back to the practitioner level of building up relationships with communities, so although I am doing this bit at the top I need the guys under me going and doing this as well. I have deliberately taken a hands off approach with that, I have put them in touch with each other and said crack on."* | | *"So we just out of the blue said why not bring the police into talk to people and it was quite engaging and interesting. People had questions they wanted to ask – and the police were saying wow we didn't realise – it is that I would really like to take forward…Breaking those barriers down, building relationships."* | |
| **3rd Level: Combined Themes** | OC/OL/Goals | *"The group has been and continues to be successful. The terrorist threat is getting worse, I think to a degree it is not if but when we have an incident in Scotland, nothing to say it wont be here, and the fact we have got that group would strongly support the incident and the aftermath of that incident. The flip side of that is the reaction and events after Grenfell, illustrates why you have to have something like this to plug into your communities to bring together and have that bit of trust… Well there has to be a point where I and Police Scotland are not driving this – to go back to the wanky phrase from earlier it needs to be organic, it has to be that it just exists – I hope that is not in some prescriptive way where every local authority is told they must have a Grey Space group – I would be really mortified if that ever happened. I wouldn't want that – then they tell them who their members should be and everything like that, what they should talk about, that is not the point."* | *"I think, for me, that is enough of a vague rational, general rational rather than vague, for me to continue to see how this is useful for me to continue to go along to."* | *"...it is not about that [a specific problem to solve]. It is about looking at the possible tension or checking the temperature of the community and seeing if there are any possible issues that maybe might come out of minority ethnic communities, getting in touch with other groups and trying to curb that."* | Perceived "lead" organisation have an explicit agenda but the group is formed to cater for goals of stakeholders, that is , the organisational needs and goals, it is quite fluid in its direction. It is wanting to learn and improve but is lacking an ability to measure and exploit the learning opportunities. (observation) |
| | | *".....confidence measures through tailored questions is a good way to go…. the thing for the members to evaluate is, is it a worthwhile use of their time? Do they get something from it? Do they feel more confident in their community in terms of support they would get from other members but also they know what their community make up actually is which they didn't know beforehand and they can see how that would affect decisions that they might make."* | *"How many stakeholders there are in it, how different their aims and ends, how different their organisation, how different the scale of the organisations, so that if I hadn't gone to that I would not be aware of all this complex underpinning of the town in which I'm working. I would say that what I have learned is that the more stakeholders involved in an organisation the harder it is to hold it together, that is kind of obvious to say that but I have experienced that."* | "*the police have an agenda but as communities we can take that on board and take it as an opportunity to deal with certain issues as well, so I wouldn't say it is entirely police lead, it is formed in a way all stakeholders can use it for their benefit of communities."* | What has been observed and what is evident through the interviews is the challenge of keeping the myriad of stakeholders motivated by this collaboration with their different aims and ends, the collaboration is lacking in micro-goals and measurements to facilitate and capture all the learning opportunities, it needs to mature to that stage. (Observation) |
| | | *"For me it would need to keep going for 5-10 years that is the kind of time to make it work"* | With such long-term ambitions and a meta-goal they do not want to put into practice beyond mock exercises, the challenge is to keep the collaboration going in the meantime; agreeing some shorter term ambitions, micro-goals and small wins, nurturing trust among participants. The existing loose social controls have facilitated exploratory learning behaviours, given space to the tangled web of goals and assisted in relationship building. The consequence, however, of not developing some way of measuring what is working, through an evaluation for example, is exploitative behaviours within the collaboration. Some temporary tightening of controls would test the virtuosity of the organisational learning and focus the participants on the meta-goal. (observation) | | |

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| **Other Points:** | | *"No I wasn't because I was away….. this is systemic of anything that pulls together 20 different organisations, the dates for meetings are difficult. I did send someone to the exercise because I thought it was important, someone who went along to the pre-meeting then the exercise."* | | |

**Table 8:2 Case 2 Within-Case Data Matrix**

## Case 3: Give Me Five

| GM5 | Theme | Child Poverty Action Group | Justice and Peace | Poverty Alliance |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Participant A (Project Initiater) | Partcipant B | Participant C |
| **1st Level: Stand Alone Themes** | Purpose (Reason for Collaborating) | *"I think you have great strength when you have more organisations all backing the same thing and then the GM5 campaign one of the strengths of it is we have a very diverse range of supporters now"* | *"The coalition was about bringing in people you know so you could draw attention to it – church and faith leaders, MSPs, children's commissioner. A group of people that could grab a headline, if it was just churches grumbling about poverty with CPAG grabs less of a headline than the broad coalition"* | *The project really falls in line with our goals, they (lead partner) align largely with what we believe as well* |
| | | | *"We brought in influential people through our contacts, pre-established links that were trusted"* | *other organisations that do not do that collaborative work, they are not as well respected in the sector, they are not as well liked in the sector* |
| | | | *"we were committed to the child poverty issue, but we also wanted to, we needed something that would give us a platform to say we are new to JP and this is what we are involved in and we are helping out and are involved in this project"* | *"it adds legitimacy to it, that these other ones are not simply anti-poverty organisations"* |
| **Organisational Learning** | | | | |
| | Substantive and Process | *"We were able to recognise were we could improve as well. We would like to have created more of an impact on social media"* | *"Others had similar stories of what they had been or were planning to do"* | *"I think ultimately you just learn so much from other organisations. Other organisations are just going to have different expertise than you."* |
| | | *"we talked about ways we could keep that going and getting more members along to steering groups and that kind of thing broadening about the reach, getting more trade unions on board and that kind of thing and just sort of increase the number of supporters would be a way of doing that"* | *I don't always feel as empowered to give my feedback because I am in the room with more senior people but that gave a more level playing field for everyone, everyone had something they could say about it, it didn't matter what role you worked in, if you had experience of the campaign, you had something you could say about it, so that worked really well for collaborative working.* | |
| | | | *"Things should have changed but didn't because [A] left, Hannah started and the snow"* | |
| | | | "it was very open opportunity for us all to give our opinions on various parts and I think that worked really well and we had clear actions coming from that it is just that not much has happened since then" | |
| | Experiential | *"We are used to that partnership working…the organisations themselves are used to working in partnership in different ways then it is just another of those kind of partnership meetings that you attend and everyone behaves like grown-ups."* | *"We have definitely learned a lot from it – I think you would take all the positive aspects of what we have learned if hopefully we are invited into other campaigns we want to take forward, I would certainly have."* | *"so I was at a thing a few weeks ago and they were talking about, these other organisations in the room saying we are really bad at collaborative working, and I though speak for yourself everything we do in here is collaborative working…We do so much collaborative working that it comes really naturally."* |
| | | *"well let's make it like [this] and you know it has got a good branding recognition"* | | *"We've made links."* |
| | | "In terms if working with faith groups in tackling poverty and poverty issues then I think we have definitely got new routes in that we did not have before, so that is really positive because they are really useful allies and partners in that campaigning work" | | |

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| | Organisational Controls/PMM | *"so if you actually had some analytics done of the tweet to measure coverage it might be bigger than that….we would love to have it as a full time person it is not a key sort of performance indicator for a lot of organisations in terms of that"* | *"there were no specific targets, but we kept a track on who we were talking to, response from schools, mentions in the press, building that awareness."* | "There are no performance measures or targets as far as I know, *maybe there are and I am just not aware of them, I guess PA isn't really a targeted work place, I do not think you can really qualify your work targets in campaigning"* |
| | | *"We had a steering group that has met on a 6 weekly or bi monthly basis just to kind of make sure everyone is happy on board and can use their different strengths and that kind of thing."* | *"I think with the GM5 group – there wasn't we must get this many or this many, I think because it was the first time as a coalition we had tried something like this."* | *"don't measure success in the same way as other organisations might – others might have targets and KPIs, we do not have that here"* |
| | | *"I am not a control freak but I am conscious that if someone does not take responsibility for an action, if it is everyone's problem then no one does it, so you need to have someone driving it consistently and do that"* | *"So I never thought about targets, I don't give a shit about targets, it did not drive me at all. We have loose targets here, we have a work plan that goes to government, but I don't even know what our plan was last year – I just do the job and do the best I can – I get paid to do this, I want to do the best I can – other organisations do it differently with KPIs and targets, the media team might have targets of getting stories to press, but we don't have them here, maybe somewhere but it is not a focal point for me."* | |
| | | *"I think they are quite easy to run. We have being doing this as a group for over a year now so the danger is keeping on track rather than just diverting into random chat but he is very good at chairing it and we have an agenda so that is good."* | *"Are the other groups in GM5 happy to work with this more loose way? I think so, PA is more similar to JP and CPAG, we are a more cultural work place fit for the organisations we work with."* | |
| | | *"we feel we have got our main recognition now among MSPs, I think realistically that is probably a more useful indicator of success."* | *"I would sit in meetings and things would get passed to [A] to do and I would be concerned for her workload, and I am not her manager or even work directly with her! [A] has left now, Hannah has come in but us only working 2 days a week and she has a huge work load and nothing has really happened"* | |
| | | *"We try to meet every 2 months. That sometimes slips. The problem is it is not the main bit of everyone's work it is just one of many things that everyone does."* | | |
| | Goals (General) | *"When we launched it, it was very clear, it was a budget ask"* | *"We did say we are not set in stone, we are happy to have that discussion. The end goal is about the people, about getting those individuals out of poverty, out of that situation. This campaign says this is the best we have found and that is what we are backing"* | *It is a very well framed campaign, solutions focused, it is very visual with the high five, it is very good in that respect.* |
| | | *"there is definitely a pathway for it to evolve in the future that can be quite positive"* | *"It fits into JP, any issue, conflicts of war, it is always young people who suffer the most. Issues of poverty it is always young people who suffer the most. So straight away, yeah there was an obvious fit, an obvious benefit, and again a very simple proposal"* | *we wouldn't bow out of the campaign we would just steer the campaign to try and influence* |
| | | *"I think so, they have got their faith-based reasons for why they think talking poverty is important or they have their organisational core purpose, if they are more secular background, so I think that has helped a lot."* | "For me it is intrinsic, everything we do I think, personally, I agree with" | *Now there are so many competing priorities, I can't give GM5 as much time as I would like to give it.* |
| | | "*it was nice to look back on what we had done even though we did not achieve the budget ask this year…. It has given us the opportunity to talk in a slightly different context"* | | *so it falls in with the way we are trying to work with regards to finding these unlikely allies* |

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| | | | | *but I am strategic enough to know I am better being a policy assistant here where I get different access and opportunities, than may being a policy officer elsewhere who maybe gets paid more but does not get anywhere near the same type of opportunities I have here* |
| | | | | *I really believe in it and I don't just say that as a staff member of PA, even if I left PA tomorrow and went to another poverty organisation or any organisation that had any vague connection, I would be asking them if we could jump on it, to do something with GM5, it is definitely something I'd carry with me* |
| | | | | "*we would want to make that the best possible and try to influence that. It is better than nothing, I would want that to be done the best way possible."* |
| | | | | *"ultimately it comes down to what individuals are on that group GM5 is quite similar in that you had [A] who was amazing, really committed, and she made a real difference with GM5 because she was who she was, Hannah is a different type of person than [A], maybe she won't see it as such a priority."* |
| **2nd Level: Paired Themes** | Organisational Controls/Learning | *"when we did the swot analysis the other week then – we were wobbling thinking about are we on the right track with it being a universal top up, we felt we were but when we did the swot the strength of feeling from those in the room that actually know the numbers and facts, they were very vocal and gave us renewed confidence"* | *"Yes we update them. We had one school student who took the campaign to heart and did a lot of awareness raising and we had invited her to speak to the group on her experience"* | *"Things like that came out of the SWOT and that group just talking, I work better talking things out, rather than just sitting at a desk all day. So I found the SWOT exercise really helpful in terms of putting everyone on a level playing field".* |
| | | *we agreed those and we talked about other opportunities for influencing, updating where we are, if there are specific things like we have written to the FM and asked her to meet with us and got it signed off by Church leaders and other high profile people, so it is things like signing off the correspondence and agreeing the core messages for the campaign.".* | | "*we did a SWOT exercise and that worked really well, it was very open opportunity for us all to give our opinions on various parts and I think that worked really well and we had clear actions coming from that it is just that not much has happened since then*." |
| | | | | *"[A] had a flip board, I thought it went really well. We all got the chance to give our feedback on it. I feel like by that point, I have been at PA over a year, it was my first policy and campaigns job, it took me longer to settle in this job than other jobs I had more experience in, but I felt during that meeting to say here is what we can and need to do."* |
| | Organisational Controls/Goals | "*Definitely yes, Having the tangible outputs has that helped to motivate people to keep going."* | *"So it is a success just buy the fact we are talking about it – saying it is not right. The success is keeping it alive and not letting it be buried for what the government want to talk about or tell us, we are trying to hold them to account, one of the main successes about it."* | |
| | | *"I think we have always had this another external deadline or factor that we can work towards"* | | |
| | | *"I think you always needed some sort of thing for people to either agree or sign up to because otherwise we would be just meeting for meetings sake which is the worst ever and you are just sat and thinking this is a waste of an hour and a half"* | | |
| | Organisational Learning/Goals | *"We started with the budget ask and all the other things grew as we met and talked about ongoing bits of legislation and opportunities we could try and harness for the campaign"* | *"That was one of the great pluses for us as well, just having started here then we met people very quickly."* | *These are opportunities for my development, my career* |
| | | *"If someone identified a good way and then if another organisation said we have now got this but what about campaigning for that, if that met our organisational aims and objectives then we would be pretty supportive"* | *"this has been a great learning curve for me, I have learned an awful lot."* | |
| **3rd Level: Combined** | OC/OL/Goals | *"where I made everyone do a swot analysis of the campaign because realistically we are not going to get in the budget to see where we have been good and what can we improve on"* | *we did a SWOT exercise and that worked really well, it was very open opportunity for us all to give our opinions on various parts and I think that worked really well and we had clear actions coming from that it is just that not much has happened since then….. It is a shame because I was really buoyed by that meeting and I remember thinking there were lots of things to do and that we can do but then everything has fallen to the wayside recently."* | |

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| | | "*The SWOT analysis showed what we had achieved in terms of tangible achievements."* | | *"It is a good way of doing it because you have the strengths but the weaknesses are often the opportunities, so our weaknesses I said I didn't think we had made a strong enough case for the child benefit part, but that is an opportunity to make a stronger case for that. Another, thing that came out of the meeting was to think of how we could celebrate child benefit and then say here is a way to make it better - £5 top up. Hasn't really happened yet because everyone has kind of died in a ditch."* |
| | **Other Points:** | *"we have had one group that had been very supportive had to stop coming to the steering group because of capacity issues and it was just one meeting too many, they are very supportive and occasionally I will keep them up to date and that kind of thing"* | *"A question of capacity, fit, workload and time."* | *"I don't feel that I can because I do not know what the official line to take is and I am not in charge of it, so I can't just go rogue"* |
| | | *"one thing we have been concerned about is making sure there is not a drop off in interest and that kind of thing so we talked about ways we could keep that going"* | *This group needs to continue, it has a lot of support in it. It will evolve, and people will change but I think everybody is very committed to seeing some sort of result from this and it hasn't happened yet so we will keep going."* | *These are opportunities for my development, my career* |
| | | *"I think walking away would send a really bad message... If we say we tried, it didn't work, we are not going to support it, it sends the worst possible message to anyone"* | *Yes, I think a lot of it is [the importance of the individual] – that sounds bad, I am against individualism, but I guess there are individual aspects to it, I don't know. I never really thought that before. I really like GM5, I really think it is a great campaign* | |
| | | "*the lead from CPAG has left, but we hope it can keep going, the momentum."* | | |
| | | *"It was a focus of our work, one of the main focuses up to and involving the launch. Quite a focus of what we have done, it has tailed off slightly now, we missed a meeting because of the snow."* | | |

**Table 8:3 Case 3 Within-Case Data Matrix**

## Case 4: This is Our Faith

| | Theme | Scottish Catholic Education Service | Scottish Catholic Education Service | R.E. Advisors | Head Teachers Association | Education Scotland | Glasgow University |
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| | | Participant A (Project Leader) | Participant A2 | Participant B | Participant C | Participant D | Participant E |
| 1st Level: Stand Alone Themes | Purpose (Reason for Collaborating) | *"we are a small service, only 2 or 3 people, so there was never any way we were going to be able produce something and hand it over to people and say 'there you are, we've done it' – it would only work if it was something that was done with other colleagues, very quickly we adopted a methodology in our work of bringing people into working groups and parties to try and address a need that was identified by everybody as a shared concern as something that needed to be worked on and that is what we did"* | *"It meant that all the people who would be implementing it would be at the table together to begin with and certainly it is my experience that people are more likely to own what they have created"* | *"I made a couple of suggestions and as usual what happens if you make suggestions then the next thing you know you have a good. I was contacted by SCES and asked if I would join the RE development group"* | *"but also interested in getting involved at a higher level, a national level, in developments in catholic education"* | *. "I was involved as a LTS representative. I was involved as a University lecturer in RE and I think because of my experience years ago as a classroom teacher, I was there as a school practitioner, so I was there under all of that"* | *"Everything about that fitted in, aligned directly with the work I had done and continued to do."* |
| | | | "I think it sat neatly, representing both capacities" | | | | |
| | **Organisational Learning** | | | | | | |
| | Substantive and Process | *"Various meetings took place with officials, with then people who were seconded to learning and teaching Scotland, to promote and develop a framework for Religious and Moral education….they had finally accepted there can't be only one framework as the approaches are too different"* | *"Working to timescales and deadlines but these could be flexible if what we were producing wasn't good enough"* | *"suppose the dynamic of working in small groups and then coming back and there were suggestions but mostly folk were happy about how things were going, that managed to keep a good forward dynamic, quite positive."* | *"I gained a lot of knowledge through that, I am not theologically trained."* | *"experts and critical friends to refer to for education or theological matters"* | |
| | | *"….it was all hands on deck, so you were allocated a portion of it and it had to be written as quickly as possible"* | *"We would work in smaller groups, so there were people going away and writing core learning for this and then doing that and then it was all getting pulled back into the centre group. People were critically coming in and looking at what we had written and questioning it."* | | | | |
| | | [Networking and relationship building through the social elements of the collaboration were] "quite crucial and key" | *"At times I was then the critical friend if it was my expertise….If people are critiquing honestly then you can move things forward."* | | | | |
| | | *"The primary school group would meet and we would normally…in teams of 3 people, then the 6 would meet and the 6 would report back to the main group, so that is how it worked structurally"* | | | | | |
| | Experiential | *"We could use our network of teachers and advisors to assist in future."* | *"Processes in the organisation have been changed because of this experience…There is an open dissemination process, sharing information among staff about what goes on so what we learned from this project has been shared, it is a very small team."* | *"having gone through a very involved and relatively long process"* | "*I learned so much being part of that group that I can take to my other ones, preparation for high level discussion, being well read and not being a passenger. Effective communication, even* | *"It created a network of greater understanding within our organisation of the value of the expertise and contribution if RE within the denominational sector. Having me as a link between our organisation and the lead one was certainly helpful, ensuring open discussion and dialogue."* | *While I do believe I had quite a lot to contribute to it, I was gaining so* |

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| | | | | | *learning how to use reply all in email, it was a God send!"* | | | *much from them* |
| | | *"We have been able to use this experience for the senior program we have started to develop. It has been a sharper process, we had learned a lot out of the earlier experience…it was easier in some ways."* | *"...better placed to go on and do these types of projects well? I would say definitely. The learning process of this is, yes...We have learned so much from the broad general education point of view going and can apply it to our senior development phase."* | *"In the practical reality of it I think the relationships that were formed are very strong, you are very much involved in a joint project in quite an intense way, both time wise and the amount of self you are investing in it."* | "*Definitely, I believe I am in a position where I can collaborate more effectively in the future because of this experience. Don't get me wrong at times it was painful! It was, at times you would go away and think, my goodness! There was personal fall out for some people, there was there is no 2 doubts about it, and at times we had to regroup and refocus on why we were there, and how to treat each other, because at times it did become very heated and difficult to manage."* | *"Into another collaborative project, you would certainly take many aspects from the experience."* | *Formative experiences do not always mean it is something new, it can reaffirm what you think, a collaboration or a project should move forward and it certainly it ticked every box for me. I can't really think of any times when I felt this isn't right or this isn't working.* |
| | | | "*The experience of taking a massive, I mean TIOF is massive, that thought that we achieved that makes us think we can achieve other things."* | | | "*It demonstrated to ourselves and the catholic education world that Scotland does have the expertise, we are capable"* | | |
| | | | *"This was the first I had experienced that kind of intensity in a group. Really listening to others then accepting and giving honest criticism, honesty. I think that the [teacher's associations] have become much more organised, much more target focused, much more supportive of each other, we have improvement plans… There are a lot of things that crowd in but having that clear vision helps you achieve."* | | | | | |
| | Organisational Controls/PMM | "*…they had certain deadlines which were always tomorrow in terms of things that needed to go in to be approved… I had to always make sure that we were making our deadlines at our end. It was difficult because some had other work to do, but it was recognised that we had to make the deadlines …"* | | *"worked well, keeping a tight rein on it"* | "*I don't think initially there was [any performance targets] but I think we realised that it could go on infinitely for the next 20 years"* | *"…a challenge and a conflict, the writing of course took a lot of time. each would consider themselves to be the most important line manager…their work was the most important, so each would tell me how important they were."* | *"His way of working was exactly the way I work, others might not like it."* | |
| | | | "That balance where the leadership isn't always getting their own way, but it is strong clear goals, clear timescale, and a purpose, to be able to form that kind of team" | | *"I think the fact that every school in Scotland is using it, not to say every school is using it perfectly, but everybody bought in."* | *"There were reflection points, checking in. We had experts and critical friends to refer to for education or theological matters"* | | |

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| | Goals (General) | *"they had finally accepted there can't be only one framework as the approaches are too different. We will have 2 but we will try to keep them together if possible, so they kind of run in parallel……..... all very well but if that comes as a result of us having to dilute what we are doing and make it less evidently about personal faith then it wouldn't be acceptable to us"* | *"It was clear [it] was going to be produced, we were clear we were going for that. Maybe where it wasn't so sure was what would happen beyond that, so we thought we didn't have to meet for 3 months, and eventually it ended up being a year, and because the RE development group wasn't meeting in that intervening time I think we lost a lot a lot of traction and momentum."* | *"I could see the absolute need on a professional level"* | *"All of us felt a certain frustration in that we would like to dedicate the time and energy so that it could be done more intensely and quicker. At the same time as seeing the end goal, you know something is going to be produced, new ideas are emerging, what it would exactly be"* | *"We were all committed Catholics. Yes absolutely. Yes, individually we all had something to gain from it, but actually we all, every one of us had something in common in faith, and I would argue, maybe naively, but I would say that every single person round that table were committed to catholic education and committed to their own faith and saw this as their contribution to the good of the faith so that was there. All of those factors at play"* |
| | | *"we tried to stick to that broad orthodoxy of the teacher using the same style of approach in teaching numeracy and literature into teaching RE so that there would be no contradiction or confusion"* | *"there definitely was a sense of regret, I think If we kept going we could have done those things while waiting for Rome to come back and we could easily have incorporated the new material and changes, so yes I wouldn't be alone in that, there was a general sense of it."* | "*I would say one criticism, and I think a lot of people said it at the time, what happened beyond was at the implementation stage, the group disbanded."* | "*I was very interested in this as an area of development and to be part of it was something that excited me. I didn't know what I would get out of it but I was expecting it to be a worthwhile experience for me… it ticked a lot of boxes in terms of what the university would be expecting, but that was not the main reason, the main reason was my interest"* | |
| | | *"one of the bog positives is that everyone saw it as part of their jobs, part of their remit but also there was a sense of excitement about something new and a sense of destiny, it was a once in a generation opportunity to shape something like this, people had a real sense of wanting to step up to that historic opportunity"* | *"the extent of the vision, creating the syllabus for Scotland, and a first syllabus that was going to be purely Scottish, because we had never had that before, we always used the Irish stuff and other people's materials. I suppose you could have walked away, I would say there were people who walked away and couldn't commit for various reasons"* | "*Professional people who were used to that style of working, but also there was a real drive. There was an excitement and real belief about it, we all bought into this"* | | |
| | | *"gave us the sense very quickly we have a job to do so let's do it, that was very positive"* | | | | |
| **2nd Level: Paired Themes** | Organisational Controls/Learning | "*...that helped us focus on getting that happy medium and use language that was accessible...the overall writing with the check in points with the consultation…the bishops were kept informed through the reporting…I suppose the major point for us in terms of reflection was when it went to Rome."* | Substantive learning through performance feedback "*what would happen is we would submit that to the Bishops conference via SCES and the conference would eventually come back with suggestions"* | "eventually there was quite strict timelines put into place, we did actually meet the timelines" | *"within that sub writing group, however, we were a group of 6 and there were tensions between us and the other group…where the clashes existed they were separated. It naturally happened. I think it was good that it did that way. In our group, the 3 of us, it was a challenge but it we really worked together, there was a shared understanding among the 6 of us but absolutely there were tensions."* | |

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| | | "*We sent out our work to partners for feedback. We had polarised views on whether things were too easy or too challenging for the end users, so it helped us focus on what the happy medium would be…. that was another stage of evolution which just sharpened us, consistent language throughout for example."* | *"I suppose the recognition from Rome, once we knew it was happening and it embraced it, it came back with a generally favourable thing, was a good thing, a mark on the work being successful….Sending it to Rome for the Recognition was it like an external evaluation. Some of it that came back had detailed changes, it was less about corrections and more about adding and balancing points of it"* | "By sending it to the Vatican for approval we were able to for the first time define the Catholicity of our Schools, we couldn't do that before and this was above and beyond what we expected to achieve." | *"there were important timelines … we had to send all of our material off to the archbishop to read, he was our critical friend…. absolutely kept us all on a very tight timescale and we met every deadline. My recollection of it we were never missed a deadline, and that meant working at night time."* |
| | | *"I couldn't call it performance markers in any formal specific way. I think we were aware there was a time limit to it. so that helped us to stay on track. I suppose the dynamic of working in small groups and then coming back and there were suggestions"* | referred to each other as "*the critical friend"* if it was that person's area of *"expertise"* | *"The archbishop was key as a critical friend or external evaluator, they were points of reflection, sometimes it was that's not good enough, well it was never that's not good enough it was these need to be changed, that needs out or put in."* | |
| | | "*what would happen is we would submit that to the Bishops conference via SCES and the conference would eventually come back with suggestions Certainly, anything that was different, or a bit out there would be a thing that would come back questioned."* | *"We would work in smaller groups, so there were people going away and writing core learning for this and then doing that and then it was all getting pulled back into the centre group"* | "*What it missed was international, I kept saying what we need is an international critical friend, I thought we needed someone from outside"* | |
| | | *"I just didn't see the point…the more people who have a look at a document and have oversight of it…. had the danger of becoming unwieldly"* | "there were important timelines … we had to send all of our material off to the archbishop to read, he was our critical friend…. absolutely kept us all on a very tight timescale and we met every deadline" | | |
| | Organisational Controls/Goals | *"we were happy with it; the community was happy with it."* | *The external critical eye was needed because the group can become self-fulfilling, so the reflection was very helpful.* | *"eventually there was quite strict timelines put into place, we did actually meet the timelines, and I think that was down a lot to personal and professional commitment. I think [he] tried to get professional people who were used to meeting deadlines and working on projects. Sometimes church groups don't work like that, it is all very voluntary"* | *"that was our absolute ultimate goal… We were told that this is the way we were going to be doing it and we delivered."* |
| | | *"We sent out our work to partners for feedback. We had polarised views on whether things were too easy or too challenging for the end users, so it helped us focus on what the happy medium would be"* | | | |

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| | Organisational Learning/Goals | "*Just about that time as we published that initial consultation paper and it got reactions from colleagues"* | "*eventually there was complete agreement on how it should look but the stages to that were probably quite difficult because there was a different understanding on how it was going to be used… I think that focused us a bit more. Then there were slight challenges in terms of expectation… There had to be a synthesis of all of those thoughts of what it should be."* | *"….in all the meetings I would argue that is how it should go sometimes inductive and sometimes deductive…..There wasn't agreement at all in that group and there was one meeting which was a wee bit fractious, we came to an agreement that both were valid ways….it* was resolved within one meeting, so it *wasn't exactly major conflict."* | *"You had to be open to really quite constructive, but fierce criticism about what you had done, because basically people were pulling it apart. People weren't getting at you, it wasn't about personal 'I'm going to get to you' but sometimes you could feel 'oh I spent hours on this'* but it went through a *really rigorous process"* | "*But as you are travelling along and doing the writing, new ideas are emerging, thoughts and what we could include in this syllabus program resource and even come to terms with what it would exactly be; a syllabus? A resource? Would it include pupil materials? .... Dialogue, discussion, all of that absolutely. Thrashing it out together*." | *"once we got to the stage where we had an understanding of how we would write the core learning we went away and wrote it. So that was just one aspect of it.. At that bigger group there were real tensions, there was one person, not a member of the writing, who had a particular vision of how this would go and he was really invested in this and had put a lot into it and it was unanimously decided that that wasn't the way to go. It could feature, what he was proposing, but it wouldn't be the underpinning direction……he ended up leaving the group…. everyone dealt with it really quite well and we respected his view and we moved on. There was a real goal and we had to get there, so the tensions were more around, not necessarily the content, there was disagreement over certain things. We were coming at it from different places, some of us were a bit more traditional than others, so there were conversations constantly, and we were having to negotiate our way through all of our own perspectives and take on things to get to this particular goal. So, having the goal and knowing what we were to do that was clear cut."* |
| | | "3rd or 4th generation of working groups, all of which had represented our advisors in RE, our practitioners from schools, colleagues from Glasgow University, they teach teachers about these courses, and we decided then to develop what became This is Our Faith" | *"I don't think that we [as an individual and an organisation] would be as highly regarded by the education and Catholic community if we hadn't successfully done this."* | "*a real breakthrough on two different occasions writing group went away for two weekends together for a residential, being able to meet together and to have a sense of purpose and to also be on a social level and have fun together, and to form as a group and that gave the energy and dynamism to go forward…..quite crucial and key really"* | *"we were giving positive stuff, it wasn't just all criticism. But we had challenging discussions and people were open to challenging discussions and if you were in that group, you had to be open to challenging discussions, and that was an interesting dynamic, that he managed to get that group to hold together"* | "we put it out to our secondary schools and we looked for comments and reactions, but we also put it out more generally to our primary schools and other partners, really for thoughts about it" | |
| | | "*There were often tensions…some of the people would go and work on things…then our working group would go through those... Sometimes these caused quite stormy debates….quite important at that stage to listen to all the views and come to a consensus….when people could not agree and we had to say if you can't agree on this then ultimately you will have to leave, because we can't be driven by this all the time. It wasn't person A against person B it* | *"it very quickly became something much stronger than that where each of the Experiences and Outcomes were going to be unpacked and it would be outlined for each class what the core learning and content would be, so it changed quite early* | "*I wrote a big paper that was totally destroyed, but only because it wasn't right for this project but it was put to use in another document, so it was a positive bi-product. It did not have enough theory in it for this which at first I didn't agree with but in the end, they were right."* | *"Many, including myself, felt that this was stage one and because we started to call ourselves the RE development group and I think we would have wanted to continue, the syllabus being step one, then going on to see about creating resources, but that didn't seem to be in the plan."* | | |

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| *was about this understanding against that understanding."* | | | *what that group was meant to do."* | | | | |
| | | | *"It led to me being involved in other things at that national level, and being able to lead with some expertise."* | | | | |
| | | | *"What is was going to look like in the end we weren't 100% sure but we knew that at the end we wanted a syllabus for Scotland"* | | | | |
| **3rd Level: Combined Themes** | OC/OL/Goals | *"…want to make sure that anything that was written was acceptable to conformity of church teaching and all the Bishops, latterly I would be sending draughts to the Archbishop, he would come back with lots of comments and alternative proposals…and ultimately it was going to Rome [for approval]"* | *"…progress would have been slower and the end result would have been different. It wasn't continual, it was at certain points for a certain period of feedback and then that was done, we were quite robust in that it wasn't an ongoing what do you think of this? Yeah, I think that it was something that was necessary, it was possibly intentional that it would help the buy-in at the end. It was to form us, but it was to form, ensure, responsibility and ownership."* | *"because it had taken so long to come back, we felt under pressure to turn it around as quickly as possible….The changes came back from Rome and it was all hands on deck, so you were allocated a portion of it and it had to be written as quickly as possible, so we lost the sense of it being translated into user friendly language, written so Rome would be happy but it didn't matter who was in the group."* | *"it was like a process that went all over the place, there was a focus on getting to the end. I think that was the most important thing for us, we knew there was an end point in this."* | | *"within that sub writing group, however, we were a group of 6 and there were tensions between us and the other group…where the clashes existed they were separated. It naturally happened. I think it was good that it did that way. In our group, the 3 of us, it was a challenge but it we really worked together, there was a shared understanding among the 6 of us but absolutely there were tensions."* |
| | | *"– the small group that came together to originally brainstorm, one or two of them continued, others had moved on. At the start the representatives were all from [partners in] the church. As it went on to different phases we brought in more different and wider representations….it didn't always continue in line, not a question of ditching people just the way some of the things emerged."* | | *"we all had the same goal in mind but the tensions came in how we were going to get to that goal. That is where the tension came sometimes, and you know what, it was healthy in the end up because he would bring us back to that reality of that vison of what we were there for and what we were trying to achieve."* | | | *"there were important timelines … we had to send all of our material off to the archbishop to read, he was our critical friend…. absolutely kept us all on a very tight timescale and we met every deadline. My recollection of it we were never missed a deadline, and that meant working at night time....Professional people who were used to that style of working, but also there was a real drive. There was an excitement and real belief about it, we all bought into this"* |

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| | | | | | "*By sending it to the Vatican for approval"* | | |
| | | | | | "*People were critically coming in and looking at what we had written and questioning it. You had to be open to really quite constructive, but fierce criticism about what you had done, because basically people were pulling it apart. People weren't getting at you, it wasn't about personal, but it went through a really rigorous process."* | | |

**Table 8:4 Case 4 Within-Case Data Matrix**

## Case 5: Just Faith

| | Themes | Missio | Justice and Peace | SCIAF |
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| | | Participant A (Project Initiator) | Participant B | Participant C |
| **1st Level: Stand Alone Themes** | Purpose (Reason for Collaborating) | *"…we talked about Pope Benedict's year of evangelisation and what that might mean…So it made sense for these agencies to start talking to each other."* | *"The idea was that a project could be established which would involve the 3 organisations and the purpose of it was to generate interest and support for the 3 organisations…The organisers then decided to split into 3 dioceses"* | *"It was a project that intended for 3 organisations linked to the Bishop's Conference to work together and to be able to do more in unity than separately. So, to get better outcomes and improve things more, encourage more people to be active, to increase donations to the different organisations."* |
| | | *we were still struggling to work out what we might do.* | *"but this review was done and recommended that these agencies should work more closely together"* | *"broad suggested outcome"* |
| | | *"to give all 3 agencies a better profile in the catholic community."* | | |
| | | *"there has always been a question of guarding your own territory… It is sad that it is as petty as that, but you always have to take the human element into consideration"* | | |
| **Organisational Learning** | | | | |
| | Substantive and Process | *"one person moving out of a small organisation has a major impact"* | *"…the personnel keep changing. The person who was managing it left and then the person who replaced her on the steering committee had no history of the project at all, and then went off sick."* | *"I think ultimately it was a successful project simply because the relationships between the 3 organisations have been strengthened... I don't think it was successful in the way it was intended to be at the start when it was first thought of and first designed…ultimately that was part of the plan for the project"* |
| | | *"Part of that was we could see something developing in Argyll, people still had more of a sense of working within the community. Their communities are smaller, they tend to know one another and are more used to the idea of community working perhaps, relationships help that along, plus there was a very energetic coordinator, so that tended to be working. Various things, we were trying to see from the point of view would it work? We were learning there were all sorts of external factors that were going to mitigate against that and it was a question of saying do we have the energy to continue with that? We decided we would continue because we had come this far, so to try and see it through rather than pull out and abandon the project"* | *"I think there are lessons to be learned from the evaluation. It would be a good idea to sit down to go through them. The problem is that the people who were involved in doing that were not the people who [were there at its conception], he is the only continuing member, so I don't think either personally or from an organisational point of view it was a success...it did not fulfil its potential."* | *"It wasn't a resentment, not that they did not want me there, it was just that they couldn't have me there. I think that would have been a useful thing to do, to help me belong to all the organisations."* |
| | | *"there is always a cross-over of experience if you do that, Sciaf people would have experience of managing projects and dealing with budgets, Justice and Peace and Missio to a lesser extent have those things"* | | |

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| | Experiential | "*I put together a final report and I felt it would be important for him to have the conversation about anything they might possibly do together in the future and that should necessarily be on a smaller scale and to try do that. I also felt it would be important, good practice, who else are involved? Where are the overlaps? [They didn't know each other] so doing something like that, bringing people together"* | *"I think there are an awful lot of lessons to be learned about communal working – in terms of how a project is set up, what makes sure that everybody knows the aims and objectives are and their role in getting to those aims and objectives. That people have buy-in, that people who are working on it have been fully acquainted with what has gone on before, with what has worked and what hasn't"* | "*I have taken the relationships I have built with some of the parishes, priests and bishops I have met during that time…..they would be much more aware of how things can break down…We have chatted about that… so when we are working in partnership again in the future with smaller organisations, there would be a memorandum of understanding or some kind of contract stating …the coordination of this whole thing."* |
| | | *"You weren't satisfied that the project was overall successful but because of it so you think you could more effectively collaborate in the future? Oh uh-uh……. we have had that with another project which was proposed to us. I put it to our steering group and then I took it to the commission. We had to know what we were getting into, who were the partners, so we are collaborating in that. My role is chair, my role is not to go and do the meetings, I just keep a close eye without interfering in it."* | | *"I think we are in a position to collaborate more effectively in the future, with the other 2 organisations, definitely. We have a better understanding of how each other works we have a better knowledge of what each other does and for the personalities involved in this moment in time then yeah we can certainly work better together than we could before."* |
| | Organisational Controls/PMM | *"Now we could not bypass them because that would not have been good politics with the organisation, so you are trying to work through them and encourage them, so it was a struggle."* | *When you do not have a top down thing saying you have got to work together, then everybody is on an equal footing and can decide themselves whether they are going to work together or not, or how much they are going to work together, or what kind of effort they are going to put in, or whether they say 'stuff that, I'm not going to do that, you are not telling me what to do!"* | *"My difficulty when I came in was finding that there were no base lines to work from, we did not know how we would measure, I could not measure an increase in activity, an increase in donations, because we had nothing to mark it from so nobody had done that type of work before we came in."* |
| | | *"… X was very target orientated, worked to deadlines and is very organised. I think they felt no one was looking at their things, that was my sense and why I thought it important they join the steering group."* | | *"were fragile anyway because there was resentment from the smaller ones about Sciaf taking over and being in charge of things and it was difficult, very difficult."* |
| | | *"they weren't able to set targets that were meaningful for everybody and the person appointed was left to work as best suited to their diocese… It was normal for us not to measure how we were achieving goals"* | | *"An ongoing evaluation for me is a monthly report stating the position of the project, whatever process you decide to use, and for me that is something that should have been done from day 1 of the project"* |
| | | *"It was almost too late by the time I go on the steering group but as a member of the commission I would have asked a lot more questions, because I just trusted things"* | | *"I organised an agenda, and when I passed the register round it was 'What's this? I've never had to sign anything like this before; don't be so stupid' and 'for goodness sake we are not at the council now' – It was the way things were said, I just wanted to know who was at the meeting"* |
| | | *"prior to that the hadn't been quite as organised. The meetings were not as regular, just because no one was really coordinating, it was just a case of 'oh we need to have a steering group meeting, we haven't had one for 6 weeks'"* | | |
| | | *"that way everybody could just interpret everything in their own way and we couldn't pull it back and say this is what we have to do here's what we need to achieve to get to"* | | |
| | | *"It was no one's responsibility, like I say the project was not a priority in anybody's desk"* | | |
| | Goals (General) | *"this was an opportunity I saw personally to see both organisations working together for their mutual benefit but also never losing sight of the fact that they were created for a purpose, so it wasn't about strengthening the organisations for the sake of it, it was about them being better equipped and able to"* | *"In my own personal opinion, they should have rolled it out in one diocese and tried the materials, piloted it somewhere, that's certainly what I think they should have done. So, Paisley became a bit of a mess."* | *"Each of the organisations had a different view on what just faith meant to them and what it really should have been doing but the 2 smaller organisations, Justice and Peace and Missio Scotland, relied on SCIAF because it was the bigger organisation they expected more of SCIAF"* |

| 2nd Level: Paired Themes | | | | |
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| | | *"certainly I felt…there was a commitment, at a certain level in Sciaf, but I do not think it was ever widely explained to the staff who…found themselves being asked to do things on behalf of this project and not understanding why they are doing this when their job is this"* | *"I think the reasons for that would be that the person [there] was a self-starter and got on with it."* | *"I understood people were frustrated that the project wasn't delivering what people expected it to deliver"* |
| | | *"…if nothing else it was good PR for all 3 to be seen to be doing that but I also felt there were good practical and operational reasons for doing so… it was then a struggle of deciding what to do*" | *"So, we eventually decided to go out with a bang and have a conference"* | *"this project had not been a priority for anybody for the 2 years it had been running"* |
| | | *It was one of those things 'let's try and see how things will be'* | *"I was very interested in what was happening with the project as I thought it was a great idea."* | |
| | | *"There needs to be a buy in from different levels and a commitment."* | *"I just about blew a gasket because the whole idea was not to set up a network, it was to improve the already existing network, to expand their capacity, not to reinvent the wheel and set up a new network"* | |
| | | *"We just kept going, it wasn't top of the list of anyone's things to do."* | | |
| | | *"…the session for example going out to Glasgow catechists, that was bringing other people into it, to me it is about getting a message out, so there were wee, small opportunities to do that…"* | | |
| | | *"Part of that would be not every member of the commission had the same level of interest in it as I had... I am not saying others can't, but it is important to me."* | | |
| | Organisational Controls/Learning | *"…we had an interim evaluation, and on the basis of that we had a facilitated day to see where we thought the project was going. I think all of us from or different perspectives could see there was a kind of drift. We were really at the point of saying, do we pull the plug? That would have been the worst-case scenario. But we did have to spend a day saying where are we and is this worth continuing?"* | *"They had a day away to sort out the differences…"* | *"The report was interesting and the suggestions in it were all sensible suggestions and would have made a difference if they had been implemented at the time the report was done. I just genuinely believe I was appointed too late to make any big difference"* |
| | Organisational Controls/Goals | *"Now we could not bypass them because that would not have been good politics with the organisation, so you are trying to work through them and encourage them, so it was a struggle."* | *There was also Sciaf being the lead partner because they have the infrastructure to deal with the money and that kind of thing so there might have been a bit of resentment there. That is what I meant by the individual personalities being very, very, important. When you do not have a top down thing saying you have got to work together, then everybody is on an equal footing and can decide themselves whether they are going to work together or not, or how much they are going to work together, or what kind of effort they are going to put in, or whether they say 'stuff that, I'm not going to do that, you are not telling me what to do!"* | *"and they were very focused on having a fabulous big event which would make up for everything but rather than allowing me to organise that event individuals had decided what would happen at the event before I arrived and any suggestions to any changes of that were instantly dismissed"* |
| | | *"we didn't want to be directive we wanted to see what would come up... I don't know that people are actually used to doing that that often, being given free reign and encouraged to take that on*" | *"I don't think [the goals] were clear, I think they thought this is a good idea and we'll do this….to see if it might work…. there was no financial pressure to produce"* | *"The goals – there were no smart goals, there were no measurable or realistic goals, they were all very general, like an increase in well-formed volunteers across the organisation - so I'm thinking what then? An extra 5, 10 %? An extra 100 volunteers? There is nothing, no measurable targets of any of the goals that had been set out there was no particular focus and no real target to aim for – it was general and all very nicey nicey"* |
| | | *" [what] we have to do, is be sensitive to the individuals involved….different perspectives, everybody looks at things from a different angle and it doesn't look quite the same"* | | *"there was nothing for us to ultimately achieve apart from delivering 'rediscovering mercy'. I took that to Aberdeen, to Edinburgh which weren't part of our project"* |

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| | | *"…they needed to know there was one channel of communication, rather than report to three managers…it made sense to try and do it that way. Somehow or another they had taken on a kind of coordination role for the steering group, a management role for the people who had been appointed..."* | | *"we should have done a lot more of during the years the project was running because people really liked that and we didn't, and I still have boxes of books sitting unused, which is a real shame…. that would have been a big achievement."* |
| | Organisational Learning/Goals | *"– so it was to try and get a different spread of area and context and to see what would work"* | *"So, you had different people involved and I can't emphasise enough how important that change was. In general, in any project the people have to be committed to it and have to be prepared to make compromises and to see that there is something worthwhile in it."* | *"this project had not been a priority for anybody for the 2 years it had been running…this had almost been found in a drawer somewhere and it was what is this all about, she had no hand over for it…"* |
| | | *"I thought the project was important and I thought it was important that we worked together and that we learn lessons. I didn't see that from the people [originally] representing [my organisation], so I have a sense that they maybe weren't too happy about it."* | | *"Certainly some people would have strong opinions straight away, there would be discussions about stuff, and other people would pussy foot around the strong opinions, sometimes things would change and sometimes it would be easier just to say that's fine, just do it your way, it was never easy because no matter what happened somebody was always annoyed. If the person with the strong opinions didn't get their way it was just another resentment."* |
| | | *"we began fanning it out to other areas, including Glasgow, so we did one or two other things from it…. I think the relationships with the agencies are good, but I think they are good because of personality, I don't think they are built up because of the project to be honest."* | | *"we probably wouldn't have done because we wouldn't have done that by ourselves it wouldn't have been all that relevant to us, by ourselves, to go and do that. But by collaborating and getting the funds from the funder it is something we could then explore and see how we could use it – and as a parish officer along with my colleague we will continually be looking for people to be more active …. building that relationship for us is critical for our future."* |
| | | *"The conference was a success it brought together a lot of people …. I think it has probably made the 3 agencies more aware of one another, and what they do."* | | |
| **3rd Level: Combined Themes** | OC/OL/Goals | *"I think so, when the evaluation becomes available, my comments were if we were doing this again we wouldn't be so ambitious, go for smaller more discreet objectives and then say, if we can do that then can we do something else."* | *"To me they would have been better having a trial in a diocese with the material to see what worked and what didn't then roll it out."* | *"and they were very focused on having a fabulous big event which would make up for everything but rather than allowing me to organise that event individuals had decided what would happen at the event before I arrived and any suggestions to any changes of that were instantly dismissed…the fact there were some very strong points of view on this is what is going to happen and there was no deviating from that there was no is this ok with that organisation, is ok with this organisation, do we all agree on this, it was ok this is what we have decided and that was a difficult thing for me to be involved in"* |
| | | *"Yeah so there is that kind of thing going on but also this idea of let's see what we can do and one of those was through Sciaf. They had been in touch with an Irish agency called "Trochar" and they had a thing called rediscovering mercy, so we adapted it for a Scottish audience."* | *"It was left to people, in my view, to get on with it and some were more enthusiastic than others"* | *"The conference was an output that everyone wanted and that everyone was happy with. I don't think individually there was much success for the organisations, it has just led to closer working relationships and getting to know each other better, but there are always unintended outcomes of the projects and this was probably the biggest one."* |
| | | *"I would like to have seen it be much tighter and saying over this period of time we will try achieve A B C and D, then evaluate and decide where we go next so that stretching I don't think helped the project."* | | |
| | | *"2, 3 , 4 years funding if you are lucky but it is time limited, where in fact this is an ongoing process – peeling an onion – there is something else when you get to the end of that time period you will see the next stage of where you want to go but you do not necessarily know what is there at the beginning."* | | |

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| | **Other Points:** | "*working against the current*" | *"you have someone coming in from the outside who doesn't understand what is happening, but is in a position of power, to influence it. So, the Paisley structure kind of fell apart."* | *"that was a difficult thing for me to be involved in because I quite often looked for support from the Sciaf manager who hosted the post because a lot of things were focused and fired at me as an individual and I had to fire them off again so what wasn't working was some people just resented my being there even though they had all agreed to recruit a person to do what I was doing and it was a very strange position to be in."* | |
| | | *"almost a PR dimension to it that having tried and failed then it demotivates people to try anything else, even on a smaller scale so we didn't want to walk away from it so as a result of that day and a fairly intense facilitation process we agreed to continue the project and to see it through to its conclusion"* | | *"Nobody said stop! To be perfectly honest!..... people kept going because X just worked away and so on and we tried to do various things, but it wasn't fulfilling the potential that it had. It really wasn't. I was kind of anxious that it completed its term and it went out on a good note."* | *"we would never just go in and do things with individual parishes without the bishop knowing because we would be sin dyed out the place"* |
| | | | *we need to know what the time involved is going to be and sometimes all these things are hard to work out. Just Faith has not put me off collaboration, Just Faith has taught me what happens when the baseline is not there, it just fractures, and does their own thing. If I had been the rep for JP at the time when the Paisley situation arose, I would have withdrawn JP from the project, because I just thought it was contrary to the memorandum of understanding and therefore the project no longer existed, I thought it was a serious as that, but I wasn't the chair then, I wasn't on the group, because you cannot just have people doing their own thing.* | | *"He did want us there in Paisley and wanted to see things happening, he has a focus on social justice"* |

**Table 8:5 Case 5 Within-Case Data Matrix**

## Table of Within-Case Findings

| Level | Findings | KSGC (1) | Grey Space (2) | GM5 (3) | TIOF (4) | Just Faith (5) |
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| Stand Alone Themes | Purpose (Reason for Collaborating) | Working together potentially reaches Individual organisational goals; | Collaborative potential made up of identified general need for the work; need for external expertise and networks; | Organisational and collaborative Goals congruence aids original collaborative potential. | General goal alignment between the participating organisations and the need for the expertise invited to collaborate added to the early potential. | Opportunity to explore multiple organisations in similar fields working together |
| | | No clear shared goal/need; | The identified need aligned with individual and organisational goals of the participating organisations. | Collaboration is an organisational goal in the sector looking out for collaborative opportunities as it is a respected strategy within the third-sector. | There was a recognised need for the proposed collaborative outcome and a need for the knowledge and expertise of individuals from other organisations. | Vague rationale weakened starting position of collaboration |
| | | Need of each other's resources. | These goals included networking, relationship building and substantive learning. | Collaborative potential is higher when the meta-goal is judged to be more achievable by combining resource of organisations with a degree of variation in organisational strategy/objectives | There was an alignment with personal goals, beyond financial compensation with the collaborative goal | Suspicion, distrust threatened the starting potential |
| | | There was belief in the proposed output value | Original collaborative potential triggered by a need and a recognition that there was strength in brining resources together: | Aligned with the interests of the represented organisation at very little resource | Roles and responsibilities of each organisation unclear or not agreed upon, weakened early potential. | |
| | | There was the possibility of unknown valuable outputs in this case learning opportunities and networking. | Organisations willing to participate as they felt they had resource to contribute to the collaboration: | Others were invited to participate because they were involved in a similar field | | |
| | | This was a quid pro quo attitude, there were goals at the organisational level that could fit with this collaborative opportunity | | Willingness to share expertise and knowledge | | |
| | | The lead organisation wanted to collaborate as they believed they would have more chance in succeeding through strength in combined resource. | | There was a willingness to participate as there was a perceived personal and organisational alignment with the project (synergy?) and so a general goal alignment across the three levels: | | |
| | | The invitation was to organisations who had a shared belief in tackling issue of poverty, either locally or nationally, | | Personal goal and motivation for wanting to be involved leading into early potential. | | |
| | | it was then a question of did the organisation see it strongly enough aligned with their own strategy to afford the resource it would require | | Personal, professional and organisational need aligning with the project outcome/goal. | | |
| | | Key stakeholders to be involved on the document's creation from the beginning; ownership and responsibility. | | | | |
| | **Organisational Learning** | | | | | |
| | | Exploratory behaviours need trust, opening-up, social relationship building | Creating the environment for facilitating substantive learning is through safe open discussion and exchange of information | The participating organisations were invited to share what they had been working on individually as a way of initiating knowledge sharing and creation | Knowledge creation, substantive learning, facilitated in an open social environment. | Substantive learning gives perceived or subjective value to the collaboration |

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| | | Shows opening-up and trust (vulnerability) required for learning – feeds back into trust | Exploratory behaviours | There was an open attitude and a willingness to learn during the times the participants spent together | Process learning occurring through the open attitude embedded in the working groups. | Learning Opportunities occur but require a process of exploration and exploitation. Lack of learning in this case due to lack of exploitation, but also few signs of exploration. |
| | | Multiple organisations participate – not just knowledge giving by one or two organisations | Facilitating time to spend together in face to face communication was a vital part in the learning processes: | Process changed when the group was put under pressure to appease an external stakeholder in a short matter of time, that space to ensure the changes were for the best got lost in the pressure | Performance measure, feedback review, opens explorative learning opportunity | |
| | Substantive – (Knowledge Transfer and Creation) & Process (Local Collaborative) | Highlights role of learning attitudes | The case supports that the learning attitudes of the participating organisations and individuals are part of inter-organisational learning; | Networking and relationship building through the social elements of the collaboration created trust for the opening up process | Barrier to learning is change in personnel – learning leaves with the individual. | |
| | | Open environment assists opening up process required for exploratory learning behaviours | there exists the opportunity to learn by bringing together different expertise: | Learning through working in smaller groups then feeding back in. | Therefore, unable or unwilling to exploit learning before it was lost. | |
| | | Exploratory learning behaviours facilitated by open discussion, community reporting and info exchange leading to process learning | The need for the correct environment to nurture openness, attitudes and willingness to learn from one another, reducing the threats of power, even if only perceived threats: | Substantive learning could occur through the variety of expertise | Learning attitudes/stances not conducive to organisational learning | |
| | | Open, relaxed manner facilitates exploratory learning and interplays with trust, rapport and relationship building | There are barriers that exist to exploiting the process learning that has occurred from both the internal environment (personnel change) | Sharing attitude facilitated learning | Trust and resource both barriers to learning | |
| | | This open relaxed manner is a possible barrier to more exploitative behaviours | There are barriers that exist to exploiting the process learning that has occurred from both the external environment (weather disruption, out with control) | Space was given for the participants to go and share and create knowledge before bringing it back centrally to try and exploit that learning. | Lack of measures to show or facilitate learning | |
| | | | The group have facilitated opening up among the participants which has enabled exploitative learning behaviours, however, so far much of that learning has not been translated into exploitative behaviours. | Trust in one another's expertise | | |
| | | | Open attitude to alternative understanding of the work being submitted. | | | |
| | | | A willingness to put themselves in a state of vulnerability | | | |
| | | | Variety of knowledge experts either internally or externally was opportunity for substantive learning, | | | |
| | | | Substantive learning was embedded in the purpose of the collaboration | | | |
| | | | Process learning could occur through an attitude of flexibility. | | | |

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| | Experiential | Performance measure + Exploitative behaviour facilitates experiential learning; | Open to learning; Dissemination process and absorptive capacity leads to full experiential learning from the collaboration; | There is an expressed belief that as a small individual organisation that they can take learnings from this collaboration and apply it to the next | Previous experience of collaboration gave a confidence in the need of the project | Networking and relationship building adds to perceived value of the collaboration |
| | | Dissemination Barriers to transferring/embedding this learning at the organisational level. | the value from experiential learning is in being more collaborative ready | Experiential learning carries with the two individuals involved | Previous experience of collaboration gave awareness of the external threats. | Implementing dissemination and exploitation of learning from collaboration at the organisational level aids organisation's collaborative maturity/readiness. (in a similar context) |
| | | Lack of exploitative behaviours and dissemination are barriers to experiential learning at organisational level | Learning attitude at collaboration level is open but barriers present themselves in the transfer process. | Small organisation presents a smaller dissemination barrier to overcome | Previous experience of collaboration strengthened the maturity of the early potential | Learning transfer to the organisation requires aligned learning attitudes from the individual and the organisation, coupled with a dissemination process. Can then be exploited into assessing the collaborative potential of future projects. |
| | | Knowledge storage; not embedded on any level other than individual – barrier to general organisational and collaborative learning | Absorptive capacity and dissemination may alter through organisational culture change | There is a belief that collaborating well is something that is embedded in the culture of the individual organisation and that experience does come through collaborating | Experiential learning manifested itself in forms of strengthened networks and relationships. | Not all organisations can demonstrate this experiential learning from a collaboration |
| | | Longer term process at organisational level, the example is large organisation. | | The experience of the collaboration has developed networks and relationships which has fed into the perception of success | Experiential learning from the collaboration can be exploited in new collaborations in a similar context | |
| | | Dissemination, absorptive capacity and learning attitude all are present for experiential learning through collaboration, without them there are barriers. | | One organisation cites learning from previous collaborations that has assisted in the work they have done for this case | Experiential learning transfer needs a willingness to learn | |
| | | Collborative working embedded in the culture of the organisation | | | Experiential learning transfer needs a dissemination process at organisational level | |
| | | Collborative culture that exist within the individual organisation helps exploitation of experiential learning through collaborating | | | Experiential learning transfer needs an attitude of change at organisational level | |
| | | Networking and relationship building opens up potential for future developments and projects and adds to the general perceived value of the collaboration | | | Barriers to experiential learning may be reduced when transferring to small organisation | |
| | | Experiential learning can be both at the organisational and individual level with dissemination and a willingness to apply it. (exploit). | | | | |
| | | Being able to transfer the learned knowledge and experience required a willingness from the participating individual to take that back to their organisation | | | | |
| | | The participating individual was able to express a sense of being more collaborative 'ready' but perceived learning without evidence of exploiting. | | | | |

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| | | | | | The experience gained by working in a successful project increases confidence among participants | | | | | |
| | | | | | The experience gained by working in a successful project opens opportunities | | | | | |
| | | | | | Being able to transfer the learning from the collaboration relied not only on the attitude of the participating individual but the receiving organisation to implement this in its own processes: | | | | | |
| | | | | | Individual sense of having learned how to collaborate more effectively in the future through having collaborated | | | | | |
| | | | | | Not disseminating from representing individual is barrier to experiential learning at organisational level. | | | | | |
| | | | | | Value in the networks and relationships formed at an individual level | | | | | |
| | | | | | Gave rise to stronger and increased networks at organisational and especially at individual level. | | | | | |
| | | | | | Perception that the individual is more collaborative aware through learning from the collaboration but no evidence to show how or if that has been transferred and disseminated into the organisational level. | | | | | |
| | | | | | The success of the collaboration boosted confidence in what they can be capable of in future collaborative work. | | | | | |
| | | | | | Experiential learning expressed at the individual level but not expressed as transferring back to the organisational level. | | | | | |
| | Organisational Controls/PMM | | | Having a shared PMM system is challenging - knowing what or how to measure | Low loose social and low mature technical controls and weak PMM system leads to subjective and perception of success. | Able to track performance at an organisational level | There was a barrier to imposing a control system on some individuals as they are being pulled by other commitments and thus creating a tension. | Loose social control required to facilitate 'playing politics' | | |
| | | | | Another challenge to shared PMM is resistance to measurement or agreeing 'measurements' | the loose social controls witnessed encourage the 'opening-up' process of learning, fostering a safe environment in which to speak. | A reluctance and resistance to attempting more mature technical and or tighter social controls | Controls were in general quite loose and performance was done on a basis of consultation with internal or external experts | Lack of congruent goals or clear meta-goal barrier to measurement – technical controls | | |
| | | | | No collaborative leadership mode is barrier to collaborative PMM | Barrier to knowing virtuous learning | It was challenging knowing how and what to measure | Tighter social and increased technical controls risked alienating those who had priorities away from this collaboration. | Relationship management barrier to tighter social controls | | |
| | | | | A weak collaborative PMM barrier to learning | Loose controls, weak Pmm, barrier to exploitative behaviours | Relationships had to be built and maintained as a new collaborative venture | Tighter social and increased technical controls led to a tension between getting the work done versus the risk of damaging relationships and losing members | Exploratory and organic nature barrier to controls/measurements | | |
| | | | | A barrier to collaborative PMM is tension between: objective vs tacit outputs | Resistance to tighter social controls: Fear of damaging relationship building process | It was challenging to always know what and how best to measure the group. | Leadership style was a possible source of tension, (need to have acceptance of it from lead organisation) | No PMM process to exploit the outputs of the explorative thus barrier to full organisational learning | | |
| | | | | loose social controls helped initial relationship building | Others want to shift the controls to bring more learning | The collaboration did not want to be prescriptive to the participating organisations in the work that they were doing | | Clear lead organisation worked well for implementing tighter social controls. | | |

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| | | Losing (Not Loosening!) organisational controls negatively affected communication and relationship, Organisational control needed nurtured between looser and tighter | Lower trust in the group acts as resistance to shift in controls | There was a limited amount of human resource that could be dedicated to running the collaboration among other commitments. | There was a balance of leadership and a need to find the right level of controls | |
| | | The loose social and low maturity of the technical resulted in misplaced trust, too much trust on certain individual(s) | | Ensuring some control of the group (There were meetings arranged to just keep on top of what each organisation was working on) to keep some momentum. | External feedback and evaluation from invested stakeholders with expertise and authority | |

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| | | A clear leader was required to bring things in an to make sure things did not drift | Reluctance to engage in strict organisational controls given the voluntary nature | |
| | | Not the intention to have a lead organisation or an appointed leader it did happen naturally: | Reluctance to engage in strict organisational controls given the complexity of collaborative organisational controls | |
| | | Likewise in the meetings the intention is to have it very relaxed and democratic but it also requires an element of control | Time constraints required some tightening of the social controls to ensure it did not drift | |
| | | Better understanding of how to measure success as the collaboration developed and progress was made it the group. | At the end the success of the project, knowing a collaborative advantage had been achieved was through the satisfaction of the key stakeholder, the end user. | |
| | | One of the negatives of not having tighter social controls is that is that the work begins to drift, | General nurturing of the collaboration required through managing the tensions of organisational control, goal setting and facilitating organisational learning. | |
| | | Barrier to implementing tighter social controls when on organisational or individual level the collaboration is not the priority | The collaborative potential evolved, nurturing and managing the tensions within allowed the collaboration to continue towards achieving a collaborative advantage. | |
| | | There was a barrier to creating a collaborative PMM system as it is not something that was part of the participating organisation's work culture: | At one extreme there are loose controls, open goals and loose, open, exploratory learning. | |
| | | In a similar way the barrier to implementing a congruent PMM system as each organisation would see the best system differently | | |
| | | Resistance to implementing a target driven or a tighter control system, | | |
| | | The threat of a disagreeable control system is would be that the it would alienate and put off individuals and, or, the organisation (diminish the collaborative potential and, with the power of exit, could be fatal for the collaboration) | | |
| | | Working at the collaborative level under similar organisational controls as at the organisational level helps with the notion of organisational fit, aids the collaborative harmony, thus potential | | |
| | | Tighter social control is shown to be necessary and to get things done in this case | | |
| | | Tighter social control leads to an overreliance on certain individuals or organisations | | |
| | | Overreliance on certain individuals or organisations increases risk of inertia. | | |

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| | Goals (Broadly Defined) | Evidence of goal types - Hidden, assumed, explicit, side-lined goals but not shared | Space for emerging and micro goals; Space for organisational goals; Space for individual goals; All feeding perceived success, value and thus potential | There was a clear but not fixed collaborative goal. | An ability to be open to small changes in the collaborative goal reduced or neutralised pressures and threats from the external environment. | Goals being aligned closely between the individual, the organisation and the collaboration give strength to the potential |

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| | | | | Encouraging and facilitating flexibility for this meta-goal fed into maintaining the collaborative potential, | Personal, organisational need aligning with the collaborative outcome, goal. | The collaboration is threatened by an organisation that does not have this alignment |
| | | | | Flexible goal(s) dovetails with a willingness to be open to learning from each other and, or, the external environment | Shared goal and altruistic belief system across the levels | Non-clarity of over-arching, meta, goal allows stakeholders to interpret it in their own way. |
| | | | | There is a value and importance expressed in congruence between organisational and collaborative goals | Open to emerging goals, including personal, and learning opportunities facilitated motivation | Nurturing the goal alignment requires a balance of encouraging buy-in and dictating |
| | | | | Goal congruence to the individual goal level, assists motivation. | The group worked well under a clear goal. Uncertainty in the timeframe of the final period and a lack of other goals, micro-goals or emerging goals, lead to a loss of "momentum", a type of collaborative inertia. Group lost potential "momentum" lack of other goals when main meta-goal was stationary. | Lack of goal nurturing creates tension |
| | | | | Goal congruence to the individual level can rely on a shared altruistic and personal belief system | The group lost potential, a sense of momentum, with a lack of emerging or other goals to focus on when the main meta-goal was stationary. | Achieving the Meta-goal can be benefited by concentrating on smaller goal initially; small wins. |
| | | | | There was a very clear collaborative goal from the outset | Maintained personal and organisational goal alignment helped motivation to continue | Giving space for other goals and objectives to grow adds to the perceived value of the collaboration. |
| | | | | Not being stuck or overly rigid on the collaborative end goal is allowing the group to continue and plan for the next steps | Individual motivation, altruistic drive gave the sense of a job to do so do it, very positive motivation | |
| | | | | The collaborative goal aligning so strongly with the organisational goals has given the collaboration strength to resist threats of inertia | There was a missed opportunity to maintain the potential to look for other goals or to enhance the overall outcome of this project. Evidence of group disbanding too early. | |
| | | | | Being aware of the outputs of the collaboration can give value, even perceived, value and motivate continued participation | The collaborative goal was clear but felt distant, it was a task that demanded time and patience. | |
| | | | | Clear goal aids the collaboration and buy in from individuals and organisations | Shared drive, an alignment in goals and altruistic beliefs. | |
| | | | | Being open to changes in the collaborative goal, along with flexibility in the organisational goal, aids potential and resists inertia | Some explorative learning activity before settling on meta-goal – early fluidity in goal setting | |
| | | | | Changes in the goals/priorities at the organisational level can lead to inertia at the collaborative | There was a need to manage the external threats to the shared meta-goal, it was being influenced by external pressure, an awareness of this allowed that threat to be reduced or neutralised | |
| | | | | Time may be determined at the organisational level, changes in priority or focus. | Offering too much fluidity or ambiguity in the goal, or attempts to meet the differences in the middle risked leading to an impasse, thus a period of prolonged or indefinite collaborative inertia. | |
| | | | | Affording room to nurture goals at the individual level, even hidden ones, nurtures individual motivation | The potential was maintained by being open to some changes in the goal but by being firm in its agreed fundamentals. The tensions led to small split in the membership where a participant could not reconcile with the new collaborative potential. | |
| | | | | Collaborative potential strengthened by alignment with individual goals and altruistic drive | | |

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| | | | | Having a flexible collaborative goal can help keep he collaboration together if it is willed by one or more of the participating organisations | | | |
| | | | | Value of Goal Congruence across organisations and levels requires priority at organisational and individual level | | | |
| **Paired Themes** | Organisational Controls/Learning | The lack of attention to nurturing communication and the relationship lead to a barrier in both performance and organisational learning. | Weak PMM system is barrier to learning opportunities | Through progress reports the group were invited to open up and share and create knowledge | The loose social controls facilitated an open and social environment which in turn facilitated exploratory substantive learning. | Temporary tightening of social controls with technical control gave rise to process and substantive organisational learning | |
| | | Having a barrier to implementing any sort of joint performance subsequently created a barrier to collaborative process learning: | There is a lack of an ongoing review or evaluation process or general performance measurements which show that learning opportunities are being missed. | The Swot analysis was a tool that facilitated an open discussion and to capture some of the achievements to date, acting like an informal internal evaluation. | Tension within the loose control system is that it allowed space for friction among the participants despite positive nature of the learning facilitated. | Temporary tightening of social controls with technical highlighted inertia. | |
| | | Shared and or agreed meta goal would have given focus to nurture other areas such as organisational learning and performance measurement | Learning and goals, individual and organisational, giving perceived value and keeping participants motivated | Deliberately planned and controlled exercise under loose social controls that enabled explorative behaviours for substantive and process learning. | Tightening the controls, focusing on the performance of the collaboration lead to substantive learning and progress. | Temporary tightening of social controls with technical control allowed explorative learning within a boundary, parameters of the collaboration to date | |
| | | | Low controls facilitate learning types, but barriers to others | Performance into learning process allowed the group to assess the collaborative potential at that point. | Process learning, changes in the ways of working, were brought into focus with the external pressures of external stakeholders and time, which forced tighter controls | Temporary tightening of social controls with technical control could not force exploitative behaviours | |
| | | | While the current application of organisational controls is facilitating a type of organisational learning, and keeping participants motivated, there are organisational learning opportunities not being realised, and the project could be working better for its stakeholders. | Update reports from member organisations led to learning then arranging action for the opportunities that seemed most appropriate, explorative into exploitative behaviours | Check points, consultation, feedback facilitated learning opportunities | | |
| | | | loose social controls witnessed encourage the ‘opening-up’ process of learning, fostering a safe environment in which to speak. | Performance feedback through the SWOT under loose social controls facilitated the face to face and open discussion for organisational learning, exploratory behaviours | There was a positive relationship between these performance ‘measures’ and virtuous learning | | |
| | | | learning through loose social controls, there is a gap in the collective knowledge to distinguish what of it has been virtuous. | Taking time to reflect and evaluate on the work, even informally was a way of facilitating the opening up process required for effective organisational learning: | Substantive learning through performance feedback | | |

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| | | | the loose social controls within the collaboration is facilitating knowledge transfer, substantive learning but similarly the group have not employed measurements to capture or to know how this knowledge transfer is being used or, indeed, what impact it is having. | | | Knowledge created and shared knowledge formalised and exploited through external feedback | | |
| | | | Thus, while the deliberate loose social controls in this case facilitates relationship building and substantive learning, it is simultaneously acting as a barrier to exploiting the learning; for example, the group is unaware of how and if the knowledge is being disseminated through the organisations and networks. | | | Tightening the controls, focusing on the performance of the collaboration lead to exploitation of the substantive learning and progress. | | |
| | | | There has so far been a resistance to implementing tighter social controls and this acts as a barrier to the feedback process: | | | Using external evaluators was one way of ensuring that the knowledge being created and exploited in the final document was virtuous in nature | | |
| | | | within the collaboration there is a desire for tighter social controls and the introduction of more mature technical ones. It laments these missed process learning opportunities to date: | | | Affirming the value in the knowledge created was done through external critique and evaluation | | |
| | | | The lack of an ongoing review or evaluation process or general performance measurements which show that learning opportunities are being missed. | | | Creating and sharing knowledge in groups then sending the work for review enabled confirmation they were correctly exploiting that substantive learning. | | |
| | | | What has been observed of the collaboration is a resistance in the group to being measured, scepticism among some participants and trust has not been fully established. This resistance to imposing an evaluation comes with a consequence of missed substantive, process and experiential learning opportunities. | | | No international feedback was an example of a lack of more mature technical controls, which resulted in possible missed learning opportunity. | | |
| | | | | | There was a fluidity in the social controls where the participants were sent to work in groups as they best saw fit before being called back to exploit the learning | | | |
| | | | | | Done without implementing ongoing technical controls as such | | | |
| | | | | | Substantive learning was evident through performance feedback | | | |
| | | | | | This external feedback, evidence of a socially tighter technical control went to ensure the exploitation of the substantive learning was in some way virtuous. | | | |
| | | | | | Tension created in organisational control and PMM; There was disagreement in the way or the amount of measuring as it was felt by some that it was leading to possible “too much” or non-virtuous learning. | | | |
| | | | | | The group successfully rotated the person doing the critique within the collaboration which created a trust required to accept and work through the learning from the internal critique from each other, the environment was such that they referred to each other as “the critical friend” if it was that person’s area of “expertise” | | | |
| | | | | | There was a fluidity in the social controls sending groups away to work as they best could before bringing them back in to exploit what had been discussed and written | | | |
| | Organisational Controls /Goals | | Shared goals needed for collaborative measurement, tensions in goals meant tension in how to monitor and control the collaboration | | By not creating a mature collaborative PMM system it has left success to be perceptual and subjective, | Tighter controls helped focus on the way they were going to write the document, stopping a potential impasse on philosophical debate. | | Undefined goal made introduction technical controls or measurements challenging |

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| | | Barriers to implementing a shared PMM system are any hidden goals or undeclared agenda. | By not creating a mature collaborative PMM system allows a fluidity about the shared collaborative meta-goal. | The tighter control was needed to overcome this possible barrier to achieving collaborative advantage, the meta-goal of the project. | No pressure to achieve particular goal made introduction of tighter social controls challenging | |
| | | An organisation have successfully resisted the desire from some to tighten the social controls or to bring in more mature technical measures of success because do not want to engage in a shared goal beyond their own altruistic ambitions for the collaboration | Having tangible outputs has motivated the group and thus fed into maintaining the potential | The external critique, a tightening of controls, helped the group focus on the collaborative goal. | Facilitating individual sensitivities (wants/needs) made introducing controls challenging | |
| | | Brining in deadlines is a way of focusing the group on a particular goal; tightening the control | In the development process of the document they used critical friends for critique, this ensured flexibility in what was being created and managed the expectations of external stakeholders | Not being able to understand each individual and each organisation's purpose and role in the collaboration lead to not having or losing sense of control, not just loose control; leading to other negative factors such as distrust, ultimately threatening inertia. | | |
| | | Focusing on something at the meetings gives reason for participation, a sense of value in participation; short term goal/target/action point/achievement | Tighter controls required to focus on and achieve the meta-goal, successful in part to the attitude of those participating | Not dictating or setting goals, open to emerging or organic goals, gave threat of drift (inertia) | | |
| | | Collaborative advantage, success in the meta-goal was reached by measuring the outcome against the satisfaction of the stakeholders. | Lack of formal reporting gave more flexibility to try new ideas (goals) in other regions | | | |
| | | No process to exploit the emerging goal however. | | | | |
| | | Loose controls per se did not lead to inertia; lack of nurturing and then losing control caused the inertia | | | | |
| | | Dissatisfaction at the outputs led to focus on fixed goal | | | | |
| | | Focus on fixed goal erected barrier to other proposals | | | | |
| | | Focus on fixed goal allowed tightening of controls; establishing leadership model and working timeframe. | | | | |
| | Organisational Learning/Goals | Emerging goals and goal shifts through the levels were not controlled or recorded (nurtured) enough and as such exploiting and exploratory learning behaviours and opportunities were missed. | learning and reaching goals the individual organisation is keen to pursue with the collaboration, thus, the collaborative potential is helped by emerging new goals and possibilities, as this is motivating the participants | Nurturing individual learning can help achieve individual goals, including emerging goals; these nurture, feed into, the potential and motivation. | The substantive and process learning process helped to shape what the already agreed meta-goal would look like, so required agreement in the small shifts in the meta-goal to maintain the potential. | Opening up to process learning (exploration) goes with being open to changes in goals. |

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| | | Open emerging goals and experiential learning (general organisational learning through exploratory behaviours) fed the potential. | Realising such organisational learning goals motivates continued participation, for example the experiential learning outputs put into practice at the organisational level | The networking and relationship building with other organisations was of added value to the organisations and was expressed as an unexpected output of the collaboration, an emerging goal achieved which added to the perceived ongoing value and potential for the collaboration | Personal and organisational goals being met through experiential learning, focused particularly on networking, relationship and trust building, in this case quite embedded to the collaborative meta-goal and overall success of the project. | Neglecting the nurturing process of organisational learning, exploratory in to exploitative behaviours impacts negatively on organisational goal priorities. |
| | | Tension in goals creates or highlights different attitudes to learning. | Knowledge acquisition allows the creation of emerging goals at the organisational and individual level, nurturing the collaborative potential through need and want for the collaboration: | Being able to gain experiential learning at the individual level worked as a continued motivation for the said individual representative. Individual learning goals which are personal to each participant: | The early consultation process led to substantive and process learning, through which the collaborative meta-goal crystallised. | Improved goal congruence facilitates an opening up in attitude to organisational learning |
| | | Accommodating individual organisational goals has fed the collaborative potential. | networking opportunities, general learning and emerging goals in smaller sub projects with partners is helping to keep the main collaboration tick along, thus feeding the potential: | There were emerging goals that came out of the collaborative open attitude to learning | Such early stage openness to learning lead to what became effectively the collaboration that this case study is analysing, becoming the "3rd or 4th generation of working groups. | Being closed to learning blinds the participants to other possible ways of achieving the desired outputs but also to other possible or emerging goals, which can lead to disharmony |
| | | | facilitating and allowing for emerging goals and learning opportunities that occur as an output of the collaboration, a bi-product or subsidiary that involves breaking off and working with other partners, assists in the nurturing process of the collaborative potential and such value is a motivation to continue participation. | The open attitude to learning is allowing for an open attitude to what the collaborative goal should be, either as an ultimate meta-goal or an interim target | Openness to substantive learning dovetails with openness to the fluidity of the outcome; only a certain amount of the end goals was fixed, and other elements were open to development and change. | Learning attitude, willingness to learn by the individual, can feed into motivation across the levels and assist in goal nurturing, improved congruence. |
| | | | | The original proposed outcome was not set in stone. In the early stages of the project there was an openness to learning from others, achieved through consultation and reviews. | | Joint spirit of exploration of goals and learning can give perceived value in the collaboration |
| | | | | Some explorative learning activity before settling on meta-goal – early fluidity in goal setting. Required an openness to learning and to allow that to impact the meta-goal, not to be too rigid. | | Focusing on one particular goal can aid exploitation of organisational learning at collaborative level. |
| | | | | End goal firm but open to how to reach and how it will look, need to be open to learning. Fluidity caused tensions between some participating organisations and ultimately a way had to be decided on. | | |
| | | | | The knowledge created did not necessarily go to waste, being able to exploit it a later date added perceived value to the individual and from this, other individual goals emerged. | | |

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| | | | | | Giving space for individual learning and emerging individual goals fed the perception that being involved was worthwhile and could give positive outputs in addition to simply achieving the meta-goal | | | |
| | | | | | Individuals gaining their own value from participation, achieving their own individual goals, even if new and emerging gave motivation for their continued participation. | | | |
| | | | | | The fluidity and openness to how the end would look was aided by an open attitude to learning but having an end point to focus on enabled this attitude to be productive | | | |
| | | | | | Through being open to Substantive Learning in the group and allowing for small changes to the meta-goal the group continued, it would have struggled with rigidity. | | | |
| | | | | | Networking and relationship building helped the opening up process required to allow for substantive and process learning. These networks and relationship building outputs became part of the emerging and ultimately a micro-goal. These all fed into maintaining that motivation and potential. | | | |
| | | | | | The tensions created through the substantive learning process, in light of the knowledge created, lead to tensions in the agreement of the collaborative goal. | | | |
| | | | | | In this case the changes to the original collaborative goal were minimal, a decision which risked losing some partners who could not accept the decision. In this case it impacted the collaborative potential but was not fatal, rather it was a barrier to progression which was overcome. | | | |
| | | | | | Offering too much fluidity or ambiguity in the goal, or attempts to meet the differences in the middle risked leading to an impasse, thus a period of prolonged or indefinite collaborative inertia. | | | |
| | | | | | The potential was maintained by being open to some changes in the goal but by being firm in its agreed fundamentals. The tensions led to small split in the membership where a participant could not reconcile with the new collaborative potential. | | | |
| | | | | | Overall potential maintained with goal consensus facilitated through regular dialogue, allowing for process and substantive learning. The threat of inertia or power of exit or other forces always there. | | | |
| | | | | | Through being too closed to the emerging goals and opportunities for further exploration there was a missed opportunity to continue the group. Allowing other goals to emerge feeds the collaborative potential. | | | |
| | | | | | Not having a rigid fixed goal in the early stages gave space for process learning to occur | | | |
| **Combined Themes** | "All Three" Overlap of OC/OL/Goals | The loosely controlled collaboration allows for exploratory learning, organisational and individual goals and perceived organisational value | | | the loose nature of the controls and openness being created to exploratory learning, balanced with the openness to emerging goals is motivating the participation | Open, democratic and reflective internal evaluation dovetailed with the open explorative attitude to learning the collaboration has and its recognition that they may need to alter their meta-goal, at least temporarily. | The loose social controls facilitated an open and social environment which in turn facilitated substantive learning. The tensions created in the differences of opinion were overcome by focusing on the end goal. Tension within the control is that negatively it allowed space for friction among the participants despite positive nature of the learning facilitated. | General lack of control, organisational learning and goal nurturing opens the threat of inertia |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Not reaching a collaborative goal, barrier to PMM, more controls, Barrier to more exploitative behaviours [e.g possible process improvements] | micro – goals remain hidden or assumed, lacking measurement to facilitate and capture all the learning | It was not forcing the issue fixed in only one possible outcome or an entirely objective sense of success and failure. | Tightening the social controls and trying to introduce more mature technical controls lead to vital substantive learning for the collaboration, focusing efforts into progressing the project towards its end point. | Goals too ambitious and too vague; required small wins and learning from them to build towards a meta-goal (collaborative advantage) | |
| | | The stance of allowing the collaboration to accommodate individual organisational goals therefore has fed the collaborative potential, keeping it away from any fatal lapses of collaborative inertia. | balancing the needs of all stakeholders against the want to process learn, measure and exploit learning | Putting in some form of performance reflection allowed for the crystallisation of the learning and goals achieved, it opened the opportunity for exploitation of these outputs | The early reports, feedback and consultation led to process and substantive learning. The group made changes to the make-up of the group early on due to the small changes in the meta-goal. The collaboration therefore had to be open to such goal shifts in order to maintain the collaborative potential. Those individuals who were no longer required or were no longer able to align with the collaborative objectives were left to exit the collaboration. | Being open allowed for new goals and learning to emerge, but required an exploitative and measurement stage to understand the value and to feedback the learning into the collaboration | |
| | | Recognising at what points to tighten controls would have encouraged more exploitative process learning opportunities and encouraged an alignment of goals. | The group therefore are always open to new and emerging goals, learning substantively from the environment around them. The purpose and perceived success of the group is in its fluidity, its democracy and its openness. This however is open to threats of drift an ultimately inertia. This tension could be balanced by having some measurables, for example an evaluation or review program: | [process learning, pmm, inertia; motivation, mainitaining the potential, need to exploit not just explore]…. "*we did a SWOT exercise and that worked really well, it was very open opportunity for us all to give our opinions on various parts and I think that worked really well and we had clear actions coming from that it is just that not much has happened since then….. It is a shame because I was really buoyed by that meeting and I remember thinking there were lots of things to do and that we can do but then everything has fallen to the wayside recently."* | Once fixed on what the outcome should look like, tightening the controls, focusing on the performance of the collaboration lead to substantive learning and progress. Linked to [helped by] having a shared drive, an alignment in goals and altruistic beliefs. | The inability to engage in a measuring process was a barrier to quantifying the goal output success and the learning which occurred | |

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| | | | agreeing some shorter term ambitions, micro-goals and small wins, nurturing trust among participants. The existing loose social controls have facilitated exploratory learning behaviours, given space to the tangled web of goals and assisted in relationship building. The consequence, however, of not developing some way of measuring what is working, through an evaluation for example, is exploitative behaviours within the collaboration. Some temporary tightening of controls would test the virtuosity of the organisational learning and focus the participants on the meta-goal. | Explorative stage of learning with the exploratory goals, through PMM under loose social controls and low mature technical control [that is, a safe informal SWOT, facilitating the openness required for discussion and creation] which then highlights the need to engage in exploitative. | Tension in control and PMM. Disagreement in the way or the amount of measuring, leading to possible 'too much' or non-virtuous learning. Tighter social control to satisfy one particular stakeholder created tension, disrupting goals alignment and possible non-virtuous learning. | The networking and associated experiential learning added to the perceived value, and these 'other' goals gave subjective success. |
| | | | possible: measurements, tighter controls, could tease out some of the assumed or hidden goals and learn that way (exploit) | Tensions in how to achieve the goal. The barrier was overcome through openness to learning, balanced organisational controls, tightening the controls and leadership and having a clear original vison to refer to. | Openness to emerging new goals, learning from them and being aware of the unknown but time constraints/resource threaten inertia; therefore, requires, at some juncture, a tightening of the organisational controls. |
| | | | | (Creating responsibility and ownership in the project linked to motivation and nurturing the collaborative potential.) Drawing in external feedback into performance not only facilitated substantive learning but assisted in maintaining alignment between the goals of the external stakeholders and that of the internal collaboration: [a balance of exploitative and explorative behaviours | Focus on a fixed goal gives less flexibility for emerging proposals and exploratory learning, thus tighter social controls. |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | Tensions existed in difference on how to achieve the collaborative goal, this was overcome through an openness to learning and balanced social controls, tightening the controls from leadership when required and the clear original vision. | Fixed goal gave a very specific learning opportunity |
| | | | | *By sending it for approval,* Using the external evaluator, with authority, gave the confidence that the knowledge created was of value, it had the dual role of marking collaborative advantage and confirming the virtue in the substantive learning created | |
| | | | | At times the group would focus on one writing issue, invite an expert to critique on it, to ensure the piece that was written was to the standard expected. Thus, the learning that was created in the sub working groups was exploited fully. This was able to work, in part, due to the attitudes of the participating members; a willingness to accept criticism and to trust it was in the best interest of the document they were creating, that is their agreed collaborative goal | |
| **Other Points:** | Lack of reporting, communication among the participating organisations lead to disenchantment, disengagement and ultimately de-motivation. | | The potential is organisational capacity, fit, workload and time; resource. | Challenge in finding the time to commit to the project, added to the long-term nature of it and is one of the causes of inertia, the potential needs to be maintained and nurtured. | Tightening social controls, closing learning and emerging goals can negatively impact relationships, give rise to negative tensions |
| | | The Collaborative potential needs to be open to evolving goals | Space for building relationships that gave added value to the collaboration and have continued beyond the conclusion of it. | Uncontrollable external threats to the collaborative potential; external powers and influential stakeholders – hypothesise that strong potential required to resist this threat; threat needs to eb factored into the nurturing of the collaboration | |

| | | | | | |
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| | | | There were also barriers to exiting, a fear of the potential negative consequences of exiting the collaboration now that they were committed: | Even with nurturing the collaborative potential there exist a threat to the collaborative potential from the external environment. | Fear of implementation of power of exit maintained the potential |
| | | | Need to have a strong potential to resist threats of inertia and keep momentum | Need to keep up the momentum, to keep the collaboration going so it does not drift or fall into fatal inertia | Potential needs trust |
| | | | The participants need continued motivation to keep going, value in the collaboration otherwise barriers and inertia become more of an issue and a threat | Emerging individual organisation goal came as a result of experiential and substantive learning being transferred back to that organisation. | |
| | | | Always an external or other threat of inertia in the informal collaboration, organisations and, or individuals can walk away | Nurturing and motivating goals gives creates responsibility and ownership in the project, and vice versa; linked to motivation and nurturing the collaborative potential. | |
| | | | There is a need to nurture that motivation to collaborate, that collaborative potential | | |
| | | | If everything becomes too loose, that is lost control, inertia creeps in and the individuals too beginning to feel lost. It begins to raise questions of leadership and power: | | |
| | | | There is a potential and need for goal congruence among the levels, nurture everyone who is on board, it is a collection of individuals. | | |

**Table 8:6 Within Case Findings**

## 8.4 Appendix D: Cross-Case Analysis

### Combined Themes Matrices

## Case 1: KSGC

| | Learning | Goals | Social Loose | Social Tight |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Learning** | N/A | | | |
| **Goals** | Not reaching a collaborative goal is barrier to more exploitative behaviours [e.g possible process improvements] | N/A | | Not reaching a collaborative goal is barrier to PMM, more controls |
| **Social Loose** | **Exploratory learning**; perceived organisational value | **hidden, assumed, explicit organisational and individual goals; No collaborative goal.** perceived organisational value | N/A | |
| **Social Tight** | | | | N/A |

**Table 8:7 Case 1 Cross-Case Matrix of Combined Themes**

## Case2: Grey Space

| | Learning | Goals | Social Loose | Social Tight |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Learning** | N/A | tease out some of the assumed or hidden goals and learn that way (exploit) | | |
| **Goals** | micro – goals remain hidden or assumed, lacking measurement to facilitate and capture all the learning; balancing the needs of all stakeholders against the want to process learn, measure and exploit learning | N/A | | |
| **Social Loose** | openness created to **exploratory learning**, motivating the participation | **micro – goals remain hidden or assumed**, lacking measurement; openness to emerging and new goals, motivating the participation; balancing the needs of all stakeholders | N/A | |
| **Social Tight** | The consequence, of not developing some way of measuring what is working, is exploitative behaviours within the collaboration. **Some temporary tightening of controls would test the virtuosity of the organisational learning** | Barriers to tighter controls leading to perceived success of the group, threats of drift and inertia. Missing some measurables, for example an evaluation or review program. **Measurements, tighter controls, could tease out some of the assumed or hidden goals** | | N/A |

**Table 8:8 Case 2 Cross-Case Matrix of Combined Themes**

## Case 3: Give Me Five

| | Learning | Goals | Social Loose | Social Tight |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Learning** | N/A | Explorative stage of learning with exploratory goals. Process learning through performance reviews highlighted individual and organisational goals achieved giving motivation, simultaneously showing inertia threat if learning is not exploited; motivation, maintaining the potential. | **Explorative stage of learning through PMM under loose social controls** and low mature technical control [that is, a safe informal SWOT, facilitating the **openness required for discussion and creation**] which then highlights the need to engage in exploitative. | |
| **Goals** | | N/A | | |
| **Social Loose** | **open explorative** attitude to learning | **recognition that they may need to alter their meta-goal**, at least temporarily - **Exploratory.** | N/A | |
| **Social Tight** | Putting in some form of performance reflection allowed for the crystallisation of the learning and goals achieved, **it opened the opportunity for exploitation of these outputs**. | **Not forcing the issue fixed in only one possible outcome** or an entirely objective sense of success and failure | | N/A |

**Table 8:9 Case 3 Cross-Case Matrix of Combined Themes**

## Case 4: This is Our Faith

| | Learning | Goals | Social Loose | Social Tight |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Learning** | N/A | Learning attitudes of the participating members; a willingness to accept criticism and to trust it was in the best interest of the document they were creating, that is their agreed collaborative goal | | **Learning attitudes of the participating members; a willingness to accept criticism and to trust it was in the best interest of the document they were creating, allowed for tighter social controls when required.** |
| **Goals** | Tensions in how to achieve the goal. The barrier was overcome through openness to learning. Once fixed on what the outcome should look like, lead to exploiting substantive learning and progress. Linked to [helped by] having a shared drive, an alignment in goals and altruistic beliefs | N/A | | **Those individuals who were no longer required or were no longer able to align with the collaborative objectives were left to exit the collaboration. Tensions in how to achieve the goal. The barrier was overcome through, balanced organisational controls, tightening the controls and leadership and having a clear original vison to refer to.** |
| **Social Loose** | **facilitated an open and social environment which in turn facilitated substantive learning**; Tensions created among actors. | Tensions in **how to achieve the goal**. The barrier was overcome through, balanced organisational controls, tightening the controls and leadership and having a clear original vison to refer to. | N/A | |
| **Social Tight** | trying to introduce more mature technical controls lead to vital substantive learning for the collaboration; Disagreement in the way or the amount of measuring, leading to possible 'too much' or non-virtuous learning. **Tighter social control to satisfy one particular stakeholder created tension, and possible non-virtuous learning. [Focus]**. Using the external evaluator, with authority, gave the confidence that the knowledge created was of value, it had the dual role of marking collaborative advantage and **confirming the virtue in the substantive learning created [Exploit]** | **focusing efforts into progressing the project towards its end point**; Disagreement in the way or the amount of measuring, Tighter social control **to satisfy one particular stakeholder created tension, disrupting goals alignment.** Using the external evaluator, with authority, gave the confidence that the knowledge created was of value, it had the dual **role of marking collaborative advantage** and confirming the virtue in the substantive learning created | | N/A |

**Table 8:10 Case 4 Cross-Case Matrix of Combined Themes**

## Case 5: Just Faith

| | Learning | Goals | Social Loose | Social Tight |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Learning** | N/A | Exploratory learning gave an openness to emerging/new goals. The networking and associated experiential learning added to the perceived value, and these 'other' goals gave subjective success | General lack of nurturing control & organisational learning opens the threat of inertia. | |
| **Goals** | Goals too ambitious and too vague; required small wins and learning from them to build towards a meta-goal (collaborative advantage). Fixed goal gave a very specific learning opportunity; gives less flexibility for emerging proposals and exploratory learning | N/A | General lack of control, goal nurturing opens the threat of inertia. | **Focus on a fixed goal lead to tighter social controls** |
| **Social Loose** | **Created openness to exploratory learning**; but time constraints/resource threaten inertia, therefore, requires, at some juncture, a tightening of the organisational controls. Being open allowed for new goals and learning to emerge, but required an exploitative and measurement stage to understand the value and to feedback the learning into the collaboration | **Openness to emerging new goals**; but time constraints/resource threaten inertia, therefore, requires, at some juncture, a tightening of the organisational controls. The inability to engage in a measuring process was a barrier to quantifying the goal output success | N/A | |
| **Social Tight** | **gives less flexibility for emerging proposals and exploratory learning. gives less flexibility for emerging proposals and exploratory learning** | **gives less flexibility for emerging proposals and ideas. gives less flexibility for emerging proposals and ideas.** | | N/A |

**Table 8:11 Case 5 Cross-Case Matrix of Combined Themes**

## Paired Theme Matrices

# Case 1: KSGC

| | Process/Substantive | Experiential | Social Loose | Social Tight | Technical Low | Technical High | Collaborative Goals | Org/Indv Goals |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Process & Substantive Learning | N/A | | | | | | | |
| Experiential | | N/A | | | | | | through experiential/exploratory learning accommodating individual organisational goals has motivated collaborators |
| Social Loose | Extreme loose control resulted in poor communication and weakened relationship lead to a barrier organisational learning | | N/A | | Extreme loose control resulted in poor communication and weakened relationship was a PM barrier | | resisted the desire from some to tighten the social controls because do not want to engage in a shared goal beyond their own altruistic ambitions for the collaboration | resisted the desire from some to tighten the social controls because do not want to engage in a shared goal beyond their own altruistic ambitions for the collaboration |
| Social Tight | | | | N/A | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Technical Low | Barriers of joint performance measures created a barrier to collaborative process learning | | | | N/A | | resisted the desire from some to bring in more mature technical measures of success because do not want to engage in a shared goal beyond their own altruistic ambitions for the collaboration | resisted the desire from some to bring in more mature technical measures of success because do not want to engage in a shared goal beyond their own altruistic ambitions for the collaboration |
| Technical High | | | | | | N/A | | |
| Collaborative Goals | Lack of explicit shared/agreed meta goal barrier to some OL opportunities; Tension in goals creates or highlights different attitudes to learning | Tension in goals creates or highlights different attitudes to learning | Tensions (friction) created in the non-collaborative goal leads to disagreement in how to monitor and control | Lack of explicit shared/agreed meta goal barrier to PM opportunities | Tensions (friction) created in the non-collaborative goal leads to disagreement in how to monitor and control | Lack of explicit shared/agreed meta goal barrier to PM opportunities | N/A | |
| Org/Indv. Goals | Open emerging goals gave general organisational learning through exploratory behaviours which motivated collaborators. | Open emerging goals gave general organisational learning through exploratory behaviours which motivated collaborators | | hidden goals or undeclared agenda barrier to a collaborative PM | | hidden goals or undeclared agenda barrier to a collaborative PM | | N/A |

**Table 8:12 Case 1 Cross-Case Matrix of Paired Themes**

## Case2: Grey Space

| | Process/Substantive | Experiential | Social Loose | Social Tight | Technical Low | Technical High | Goals | Org/Indv Goals |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Process & Substantive Learning | N/A | | | | | | | Knowledge acquisition allows the creation of emerging goals at the organisational and individual level, nurturing the motivation/potential through need and want for the collaboration; Learning and goals, individual and organisational, giving perceived value and keeping participants motivated |
| Experiential | | N/A | | | | | | experiential learning outputs put into practice at the organisational level and realising such organisational learning goals motivates continued participation |
| Social Loose | **loose social controls encourage the 'opening-up' process of learning, fostering a safe environment in which to speak; facilitating knowledge transfer, substantive learning.** | | N/A | | | | | |
| | So, is facilitating a type of organisational learning, keeping participants motivated but there are organisational learning opportunities not being realised, and the project could be working better for its stakeholders | | | | | | | |
| Social Tight | Lack of and resistance to tighter controls is acting as a barrier to exploiting the learning; | | | N/A | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Acts as a barrier to the feedback process. | | | | | | | |
| | Resistance comes from scepticism among some participants and trust has not been fully established. | | | | | | | |
| Technical Low | Weak/lack of PMM system is barrier to learning opportunities; | Weak/lack of PMM system is barrier to learning opportunities | | | N/A | | | |
| | there is a gap in the collective knowledge to distinguish what of it has been virtuous; | | | | | | | |
| | the group have not employed measurements to capture or to know how this knowledge transfer is being used or, indeed, what impact it is having. Lack of exploitation. | | | | | | | |
| Technical High | | | | | | N/A | | |
| Goals | networking opportunities, general learning and emerging/exploratory goals in smaller sub projects with partners is helping to keep the main collaboration tick along, thus feeding motivation. | | | | | | N/A | |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Org/Ind Goals | Facilitating and allowing for emerging goals and learning opportunities that occur as an output of the collaboration, a bi-product or subsidiary that involves breaking off and working with other partners; | Learning and goals, individual and organisational, giving perceived value and keeping participants motivated | | | | | | N/A |
| | Learning and goals, individual and organisational, giving perceived value and keeping participants motivated | | | | | | | |

**Table 8:13 Case 2 Cross-Case Matrix of Paired Themes**

## Case 3: Give Me Five

| | Process/Substantive | Experiential | Social Loose | Social Tight | Technical Low | Technical High | Collaborative Goals | Org/Indv. Goals |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Process & Substantive Learning | N/A | | | | | | collaborative open attitude to learning lead to emerging goals; | Nurturing individual learning can help achieve individual goals, including emerging goals; these nurture, feed into, the potential and motivation |
| | | | | | | | The open attitude to learning is allowing for an open attitude to what the collaborative goal should be, either as an ultimate meta-goal or an interim target | |
| Experiential | | N/A | | | | | | Being able to gain experiential learning at the individual level worked as a continued motivation for the said individual representative. Individual learning goals which are personal to each participant |
| Social Loose | **loose social controls facilitated the face to face and open discussion for organisational learning, exploratory behaviours;** | | N/A | | | | not creating a mature collaborative PMM system allows a fluidity about the shared collaborative meta-goal. | By not creating a mature collaborative PMM system it has left success to be perceptual and subjective. |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Taking time to reflect and evaluate on the work, even informally was a way of facilitating the **opening up process required for effective organisational learning** | | | | | | | |
| Social Tight | **progress reports the group were invited to open up and share and create knowledge; Update reports from member organisations led to learning then arranging action for the opportunities that seemed most appropriate, explorative into exploitative behaviours** | | | N/A | | | **tightening the control, bringing in deadlines is a way of focusing the group on a particular goal;** | |
| Technical Low | Swot analysis was a tool that facilitated an open discussion and to capture some of the achievements to date, acting like an informal internal evaluation; | | | | N/A | | not creating a mature collaborative PMM system allows a fluidity about the shared collaborative meta-goal. | By not creating a mature collaborative PMM system it has left success to be perceptual and subjective. |
| | Performance into learning process allowed the group to assess the collaborative potential at that point | | | | | | | |
| Technical High | | | | | | N/A | | |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Collaborative Goals | | | | Focusing on something at the meetings gives reason for participation, a sense of value in participation; **short term goal/target/action point/achievement** | Having tangible outputs has motivated the group and thus fed into maintaining the potential | | N/A | |
| Org/Indv Goals | The networking and relationship building with other organisations was of added value to the organisations and was expressed as an unexpected output of the collaboration, an emerging goal achieved which added to the perceived ongoing value and potential for the collaboration. | | | | | | | |

**Table 8:14 Case 3 Cross-Case Matrix of Paired Themes**

## Case 4: This is Our Faith

| | Process/Substantive | Experiential | Social Loose | Social Tight | Technical Low | Technical High | Collaborative Goals | Org/Indv. Goals |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Process/Substantive | N/A | | **Creating and sharing knowledge in groups… There was a fluidity in the social controls where the participants were sent to work in groups as they best saw fit before being called back to exploit the learning** | sending the work for review enabled confirmation they were correctly **exploiting that substantive learning; Process learning, changes in the ways of working**, were brought into focus with the external pressures of external stakeholders and time, which forced tighter controls | | | The substantive and process learning process helped to shape what the already agreed meta-goal would look like, so required agreement in the small shifts in the meta-goal to maintain the potential; Through being open to Substantive Learning in the group and allowing for small changes to the meta-goal the group continued, it would have struggled with rigidity; Openness to substantive learning dovetails with openness to the fluidity of the outcome; only a certain amount of the end goals was fixed, and other elements were open to development and change. | The knowledge created did not necessarily go to waste, being able to exploit it a later date added perceived value to the individual and from this, other individual goals emerged. |
| Experiential | | N/A | | | | | | Personal and organisational goals being met through experiential learning, focused particularly on networking, relationship and trust building, in this case quite embedded to the collaborative meta-goal and overall success of the project. |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Social Loose | The loose social controls facilitated an **open and social environment** which in turn **facilitated exploratory substantive learning;** The group successfully rotated the person doing the critique within the collaboration which created a trust required to accept and work through the learning from the internal critique from each other; Tension/negative within the loose control system is that it allowed space for friction among the participants despite positive nature of the learning facilitated. | | N/A | | | | | |
| Social Tight | **This external feedback, evidence of a socially tighter technical control went to ensure the exploitation of the substantive learning was in some way virtuous**; Tension created in organisational control and PMM; There was disagreement in the way or the amount of measuring as it was felt by some that it was leading to possible "too much" or non-virtuous learning. | | | N/A | | | **Tighter controls helped focus on the way they were going to write the document, stopping a potential impasse on philosophical debate**; was needed to overcome this possible barrier to achieving collaborative advantage, the meta-goal of the project; **helped the group focus on the collaborative goal.** | |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Technical Low | Check points, consultation, feedback facilitated learning opportunities; There was a positive relationship between these performance 'measures' and virtuous learning. | | | | N/A | | Collaborative advantage, success in the meta-goal was reached by measuring the outcome against the satisfaction of the stakeholders; In the development process of the document they used critical friends for critique, this ensured flexibility in what was being created and managed the expectations of external stakeholders | |
| Technical High | Using external evaluators was one way of ensuring that the knowledge being created and exploited in the final document was virtuous in nature; a lack of more mature technical controls resulted in possible missed learning opportunity. | | | | | N/A | | |
| Collaborative Goals | Not having a rigid fixed goal in the early stages gave space for process learning to occur; | | **There was a fluidity in the social controls where the participants were sent to work in groups as they best saw fit in order to achieve the set target** | | | | N/A | |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Offering too much fluidity or ambiguity in the goal, or attempts to meet the differences in the middle risked leading to an impasse, thus a period of prolonged or indefinite collaborative inertia; | | | | | | | |
| | End goal firm but open to how to reach and how it will look, need to be open to learning. Fluidity caused tensions between some participating organisations and ultimately a way had to be decided on; | | | | | | | |
| | Through being too closed to the emerging goals and opportunities for further exploration there was a missed opportunity to continue the group. Allowing other goals to emerge feeds the motivation/collaborative potential | | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Org/Indv Goals | Individuals gaining their own value from participation, achieving their own individual goals, even if new and emerging, gave motivation for their continued participation; | | | **being open to some changes in the goal but by being firm in its agreed fundamental.** The tensions led to small split in the membership where a participant could not reconcile with the new collaborative potential | | | | N/A |
| | These networks and relationship building outputs became part of the emerging and ultimately a micro-goal; | | | | | | | |
| | Networking and relationship building helped the opening up process required to allow for substantive and process learning | | | | | | | |

**Table 8:15 Case 4 Cross-Case Matrix of Paired Themes**

## Case 5: Just Faith

| | Process & Substantive | Experiential | Social Loose | Social Tight | Technical Low | Technical High | Collaborative Goals | Org/Indv. Goals |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Process & Substantive Learning | N/A | | | | | | Opening up to process learning (exploration) goes with being open to changes in goals; Learning attitude, willingness to learn by the individual, can feed into motivation across the levels and assist in goal nurturing, improved congruence; Being closed to learning blinds the participants to other possible ways of achieving the desired outputs but also to other possible or emerging goals, which can lead to disharmony | Opening up to process learning (exploration) goes with being open to changes in goals. Learning attitude, willingness to learn by the individual, can feed into motivation across the levels and assist in goal nurturing, improved congruence; Being closed to learning blinds the participants to other possible ways of achieving the desired outputs but also to other possible or emerging goals, which can lead to disharmony; Neglecting the nurturing process of organisational learning, exploratory in to exploitative behaviours impacts negatively on organisational goal priorities. |
| Experiential | | N/A | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Social Loose | **Inability to exploit learning at an earlier stage** lead to the feeling of inertia and it not fulfilling the potential the collaboration had. | | N/A | | | | **Lack of formal reporting gave more flexibility to try new ideas (goals)** in other regions; No process to exploit the emerging goal. Not dictating or setting goals, open to emerging or organic goals, gave threat of drift (inertia); Loose controls per se did not lead to inertia; lack of nurturing and then losing control caused the inertia | |
| Social Tight | **Temporary tightening of social controls gave rise to process and substantive organisational learning, strengths and positive outputs highlighted inertia & forced evaluation of the potential; but could not force exploitative behaviours. Allowed explorative learning within a boundary, parameters, of the collaboration to date.** | | | N/A | | | | |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Technical Low | lack of engaging in more technical control measure were unable to exploit and, or, transfer the good practice internally in collaboration; Did not open up to the exploration processes required for learning, a lack of nurturing and or a facilitation tool such as measuring performance is among the possibilities why this occurred. | | | | N/A | | Lack of formal reporting gave more flexibility to try new ideas (goals) in other regions | |
| Technical High | Temporary tightening of technical control gave rise to process and substantive organisational learning, strengths and positive outputs; highlighted inertia & forced evaluation of the potential; but could not force exploitative behaviours. Allowed explorative learning within a boundary, parameters, of the collaboration to date. | | | | | N/A | | |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Collaborative Goals | Joint spirit of exploration of goals and learning can give perceived value in the collaboration; Improved goal congruence facilitates an opening up in attitude to organisational learning; Focusing on one particular goal can aid exploitation of organisational learning at collaborative level. | | Barrier to tighter social control: Little pressure, internal or external, to achieve particular goal. | Triger for fixed goal and control: Dissatisfaction at the outputs led to focus on fixed goal; **Focus on fixed goal erected barrier to other proposals/emerging goals**. | Undefined collaborative goal made introduction of performance measurements challenging | | N/A | |
| Org/Indv Goals | Joint spirit of exploration of goals and learning can give perceived value in the collaboration; Improved goal congruence facilitates an opening up in attitude to organisational learning | | Introducing controls challenging: **Facilitating individual sensitivities (wants/needs)**; Not being able to understand each individual and each organisation's purpose and role in the collaboration lead to not having or losing sense of control, not just loose control; leading to other negative factors such as distrust, ultimately threatening inertia. | | Introducing controls challenging: Facilitating individual sensitivities (wants/needs) | | | N/A |

**Table 8:16 Case 5 Cross-Case Matrix of Paired Themes**